

PERSONAL

Since we have all of us been dragged up somehow, mostly within a family, and we have all been to school, it is to be expected that everyone feels qualified to express opinions about both schools and families, how they are and how they ought to be. If anything (and this is a hard judgment to make) I believe more nonsense is talked about the family than about the school.

And the reason is paradoxical. Although so many people have experience of the family in one form or another, they are more easily seduced by half-baked theory in this field than in any other. Indeed, it isn't even theory that seduces and misleads them; it is simple cliché. Everyone knows what the family is supposed to be... mother and father and at least one child, living in heavenly harmony, with the Christmas tree in the corner and the cat before the fire. And very nice too. But, we may ask, what are the features essential to such an ideal picture?

The answer most often given, I suppose, would be that there must be a pair of grown-ups of opposite sexes. Without this, the ideal family couldn't even begin to exist. Therefore the notion of the one-parent family is introduced as the signal for disaster. It seems, as a matter of simple logic, to be the furthest possible from the ideal.

Now I in no way want to deny that many one-parent families are in extremely bad shape. For a woman, whether married or not, living alone with a small child, battling with problems of housing, of child-care, of being able to earn, life must indeed be almost unbearable. The child of such a woman may well suffer. But it is arguable that what he will suffer from most is poverty and material deprivation. If single parents could imaginably overcome their financial problems, the child might, or might not, suffer: it would entirely depend on the amount of love, freedom, understanding, encouragement and hope with which he was surrounded. And these things are needed by all children equally, however many parents they have.

It would therefore be much better, in my view, if, when discussing "problem" children, teachers and social workers would talk about those children who were manifestly living below the poverty line, rather than about one-parent children, as if these children would necessarily be problematic. It would then be much clearer what sort of deprivation the problem children were suffering from.

But, it may be argued, this is to disregard everything we know about the importance to a child of having two parents, a male "model" and a female "model". My response is to ask how



Mary Warnock

much we really do know. What is the evidence? I can accept, of course, that a child brought up without a mother, will be more ignorant of women than a child with mother and father. But this is not to say that he cannot catch up later, or that his attitude, either to men or women, will be permanently affected. The widespread belief that it will be, and that he will be permanently damaged, is based on certain assumptions, certain unproved theories, vaguely descended from

Freud, and probably passed on in a somewhat random way to the training of social workers and teachers.

At long last it is permissible to question the truth and even the utility of Freud's general system of mythology. At least we no longer have to accept it as given, with or without supporting evidence. It may therefore also be permitted to question the assumption that the child of the one-parent family is for that reason alone worse off than his contemporaries who conform to the standard pattern. Guessing, I would say that a far more important factor in the happiness and security of a child was whether his missing parent, father or mother, was spoken of with affection and respect or with disgust and horror, or not spoken of at all. An equally, perhaps even more, important factor might well be whether the child had brothers and sisters.

It is likely that in the future we shall have to be prepared to consider these and other questions about what constitutes a family, and what makes a family a good or a bad environment for a child. We cannot be content with any simplification, which in any case many people know from experience to be wrong, that two parents are good, one parent is bad. How are we to rate a parent and a step-parent? How a mother and husband, with a child born

by artificial insemination, father unknown? How will a child brought up by two women living together, or two men, rate in the happy family stakes?

With more alternative ways of starting a family available, and more permitted discussion of the alternatives, it will be necessary for us to change some of our entrenched attitudes. For otherwise it will be the children of these new-style families who will suffer. Either they will be deceived about their origins in order that the myth of the ideal family may be preserved; or they will know that their own family falls short of what is expected, and they will feel themselves a prey to the social workers and teachers, who will regard them as At Risk.

It wouldn't be bad to try eliminating the concept of the family altogether for a bit, first from political, then from sociological and educational discourse, as well as from the discourse of advertising. It might be a good way to get us to think of children as individuals, not as products of their heredity and environment, to be understood only in those terms. But if that is too difficult to contemplate (and obviously the present Government, among other interest groups, would find it very upsetting to have to deny themselves the concept) then at least let us ban the expression "one-parent family", and see how we get on.

TES CHRISTMAS QUIZ

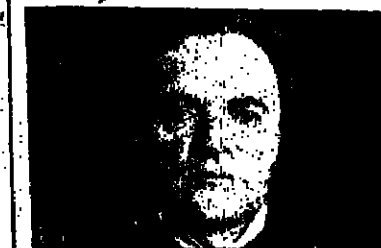
Here, in case you missed them first time round, are the really important events, controversies, personalities and snippets of gossip as recorded by *The TES* month by month over the past year. Impress your friends, colleagues and superiors with your powers of recall and intuitive guesswork. The answers are on page 13.

JANUARY

- Which year was described as "not a good year for education"?
- Which country did *The TES* say was the first to have provided every secondary school with a computer?
- It was announced that the only...

...closing. Where?

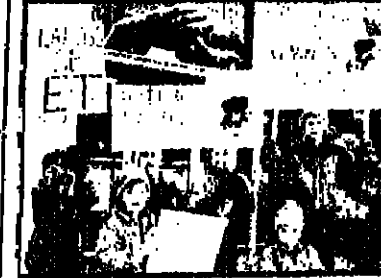
- Why did *The TES* have to apologise to children's author Jan Needle?
- Which school applied to the Charity Commissioners for permission to exclude local education authority members from automatic seats on its governing body?



6 Julian Glover, as he appeared in *The TES* on January 11 and on television. Which part was he playing?

FEBRUARY

- Which country declared 1983 to be "The Year of the Pupil"?
- Which strike caused 4,000 children to work at home?
- Why did teachers' pay talks get off to an electric start?
- Which school's head claimed it was "the most overcrowded and ill-equipped secondary school in the country"?
- Which girls' school launched a £1.3m appeal for an engineering centre?



12 What were these young protesters worked up about?

MARCH

- By what percentage did average pocket money levels rise in 1982?

- In which country did a 14-year-old blow up his teacher's car after a bad report?
- Which organization was granted a place on ACSET?
- Which county voted to give women three years maternity leave?
- Which ship announced that it would be taking up other work in early 1984?



18 Which organization were these two promoting?

APRIL

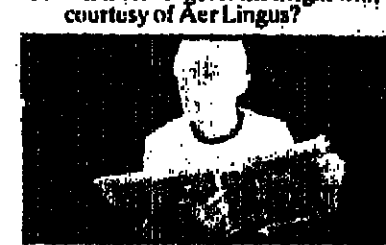
- Where did Susan Ryan become education minister?
- On which university campus did Wang Laboratories announce plans to set up a £40m manufacturing plant?
- What was said to have been at large in a Glasgow school for four years?
- Who was chosen for Warrington South after failure at Tatton?
- Which I.E.A.'s legal department successfully prosecuted a mother for teacher assault?



24 What was this headmaster up to?

MAY

- Which champion admitted having been thrown out of Enfield Grammar School "in their best interests"?
- Which committee was said to be contemplating major changes (and produced *Mode E* and *Mode N* in the year)?
- Which character in *The Archers* won an isolated place at Borchester Grammar School?
- What did Ysgol John Bright win, courtesy of Aer Lingus?

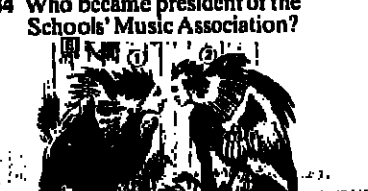


29 Can you remember who he was?

JUNE

- Which London borough became...

- What was stolen from a store in Chertsey Street?
- Why were Dallas and Kenny Everett, in hot water at the DES?
- Which problem was highlighted by Jan Harding's report?
- Who became president of the Schools' Music Association?



35 Who were these two, featured in a political article on June 17?

JULY

- Which college threatened to take Sir Keith Joseph to the High Court over its closure?
- Whose speech had to be read by actor Leon Tanner because of a husky throat?
- Who died on a fun run to raise money for the Natter Children's Centre in Huddersfield?
- Name the Education Secretary's special adviser who was reported to be joining the Prime Minister's personal policy unit.
- Who was appointed Senior Chief Inspector at the DES?



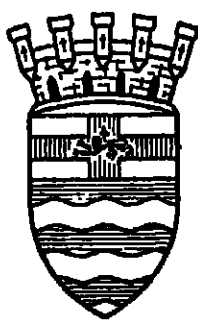
41 Where is this school, now threatened with closure a second time?

AUGUST

- Up to £1m is allegedly owed to British universities and polytechnics by students from which African state?
- A LMA questionnaire produced 13 nearly identical replies. From whom?
- The International School of Choueifat was featured in the August 26 issue. Where is its headquarters?
- Who claimed that his school had the best sport, recreational and facilities in the country?
- Name the famous art and architecture historian who died this month.

SEPTEMBER

- Name Central Television's new TV quiz show for sixth-formers.
- Which university came top of this year's graduate employment league table?
- What did Mary Warnock say was the worst clothing mistake that middle-aged women could make?
- Which BBC programme celebrated its 5,000th edition, amid charges that it was too middle-class?
- "The Bishop" was tipped to head the Select Committee on Education, Science and the Arts. What is his real name?

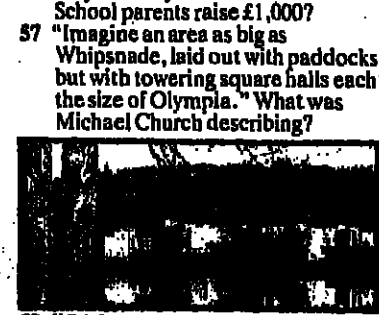


64 Tyrrell Burgess wrote a spirited defence of the return of this. Whose motif is it?

DECEMBER

- Biddy Passmore profiled the new ILEA chief inspector. What is his name?
- Which I.E.A. became the first to declare its intention to stick to the Government's 3 per cent guideline for teachers' pay?
- Which borough announced the use of maths and English tests to weed out unsatisfactory teachers and heads?
- Who wrote: "Pringle sweaters, French yoghurt, cashmere scarves, CND badges, Vimto, Diet Pepsi... all tell rich and varied tales..."?
- What did the HMI say Chell High School, Stoke-on-Trent, had too much of?

Some quotes of the year: who said (allegedly)...



58 Which university campus is this?

NOVEMBER

- Who became Labour's new education spokesman?
- What did the NUT say heads should avoid banning at lunchtime?
- Why will Mrs Anne Langley soon be moving from California to Brighton?
- Quaker Susan Millington gave up teaching 18 months ago. To do what?
- What is the nominal link between the Master of Marlborough and the chairman of the NUT's middle schools advisory committee?

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Educational Supplement

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London worst hit as intruders are blamed for extortion and violence

Rising crime forces FE colleges into stiff security

by Diane Spencer

Tougher security measures are being brought in at further education colleges to combat a steep rise in theft and violence.

Over the past year they have been the scenes of extortion, assaults and muggings plus rumoured drug pushing and protection rackets, with London colleges particularly badly hit.

Both the college authorities and staff unions recognize that the crimes involve students and outsiders.

In one incident a principal was threatened with a knife and hit with a bottle. Several students have also been stabbed and a woman lecturer attacked in a lavatory and her handbag stolen.

Most of London's colleges now have security staff on the doors and students carry identity cards.

Now Hammersmith and West London College is to install electronic unarmoured next term which will allow through registered students only.

Mr Bernard Smith, general secretary of the Association of Principals of Colleges, said this week: "Colleges are seen as rich pickings by a small minority for petty theft and extortion."

The lecturers' union, NATFHE, is also worried and Mr David Trieman, its inner London representative, said: "In the past 12 months there has been an unacceptably high number of either

serious or potentially serious incidents."

The colleges face trouble of two kinds - indiscipline from students and petty crime caused by intruders.

With the increase in youth unemployment, colleges are warm and inviting places to go. In Sheffield's Granville Road College, the principal, Mr Arthur Colledge, said the machines in the students' union were particularly attractive for unemployed youths.

Hammersmith and West London College is the biggest single site college in London with around 11,000 students amalgamated from 12 sites three years ago.

Mr Roger Carus, the principal, is confident that the new security measures will keep out intruders and that the problems of theft and violence will disappear. "Once students are inside, it is a teacher's problem. Discipline is a matter for them."

But the college staff are not so sure. Ms Sue Fearnie, a NATFHE representative at the college, called for more money to be spent on the college equivalents of youth workers and on student counsellors.

The ILEA spends £500,000 a year on security and is about to review this. It is one of the fastest growing parts of the budget, said Mr Ron Aldridge, inspector for further education. He added that the increase in violence and the need for security of premises was just "alas, part of the general scene in London".

Crocodiles menace school

Crocodiles have killed 25 pupils in the past five years at one primary school in western Zambia, according to an official report.

Children at the school, in Senanga district, 340 miles west of Lusaka, have been drinking from the nearby crocodile-infested Kalongola River. Crocodiles are common to most of Zambia's rivers and lakes but there is no dependable estimate of how many lives they claim.

Last year they were reported to be taking an average of 30 people a month from the shores of Lake Mweru in northern Luapula province.

In another region, angry villagers beat up their chief and damaged his house after accusing him of not doing enough to combat the menace.

The figure on the Senanga school was given in a report by the Zambia Information Services on the installation of a water pump for the pupils' use.

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Illustrator Quentin Blake demonstrates his skills to children at an exhibition of his work at the National Theatre in London

Fager parents in 3Rs clash

by Nick Wood

Teachers and parents clash over the best way to prepare children for school, according to a new infant school survey.

Most parents believe it is important to teach their children specific academic skills such as how to read, write and do sums. But teachers think they are better advised to restrict their help to building up language skills by reading and telling them stories.

Almost without exception, teachers want parents to avoid teaching their children the rudiments of arithmetic.

These are the results from a survey of attitudes and practice among over 200 parents and 31 teachers of 277 children attending 33 infant schools in London. They were reported to the annual London conference of the British Psychological Society last week by Mrs Clare Farquhar of the Thomas Coram Research Unit at the London University Institute of Education.

One in four of the reception teachers interviewed said that they flatly disapproved of any attempt by parents to teach academic skills to children under the age of five. Nearly six in 10 were prepared to sanction such intervention with reservations. Only one in 16 gave unqualified approval to parental teaching of pre-school children.

Overall, teachers were firmly opposed to parents teaching their children arithmetic. They believed parents would foul up the conceptual

approach, adopted in the first year of schooling, by making their offspring do page after page of old-fashioned sums.

They also disapproved of parents teaching their children to write, principally because they thought they would make a mess of it by instructing them to use capital letters instead of lower case.

Parents, however, take a different view. Seven in 10 say they have prepared their children for school by teaching reading, writing and arithmetic.

They say they will go on providing this help once their children are at school, because they see it as both enjoyable and their duty. Black parents pay particular stress on the importance of extra tuition for their children.

Both groups were also asked what factors determine a child's academic success. Predictably, parents believed the school was the most important influence, while teachers pointed to the family.

Among parents, there were some subtle but striking differences in attitudes. Whites said that social class, education and occupation exercised a powerful influence over how well a child did at school, whereas blacks were inclined to lay greater stress on the involvement, interest and efforts of parents.

Changing channels

by Carolyn O'Grady

Schools' programmes are to be transferred by Independent Television to Channel 4 in the autumn of 1985. The move has involved a capitulation by commercial interests within ITV, with the Independent Broadcasting Authority insisting almost two years should be allowed for its preparation, not one as the companies proposed.

But two problems must be overcome before then. First, the IBA estimates that about 200 schools - mainly rural primaries - will still not receive Channel 4 by that date. Secondly, the regional element in the ITV schools service must be protected; one-third of the output is regional.

An IBA spokesman said last week that the authority is considering setting up a videocassette distribution service for those schools unable to receive the service on Channel 4, and it will soon begin negotiations about transmitting regional programmes on Channel 4.

Local advertisements are already carried by Channel 4, so this problem is not insurmountable. As an alternative plan, the time on Channel 4 could be extended to broadcast regional programmes nationally.

What will happen after 1990 can only be the subject of speculation, because at that time everything goes into the melting pot as Channel 4's contractual arrangements with ITV come to an end. Videocassette distribution and night-time broadcasting have been discussed, but the emergence of cable television, satellite broadcasting and new technologies may throw up other possibilities.

Arts/Books

Television: Peter Mullen on the hidden effects of the BBC's new style of presentation; Robin Buss previews Channel 4's *A Childhood*; Betka Zamoyka discusses the BBC's quintet of programmes on Orwell. Heather Neill on Christmas shows; Roy Shew on Philip Larkin; Hermann Peschmann and Katya Watter on Shakespeare studies. Science textbooks. 18-25

Resources/Media

Christmas Charity Appeal Week: photographs by pupils at Newquay Trevelgas of events including the egg push, a sponsored dip in the sea and a fancy dress parade; David Self reviews *The Rainbow Coloured Disco Dancer* and Hugh David surveys some video releases for young children. 26-27

Platform

"Down with the system" is Gerald Haigh's New Year message. 4

Core Français

One Hertfordshire comprehensive is determined to teach French in mixed ability classes to all 11 to 16-year-olds as part of a common curriculum. 17



Flat spin

After Torvill and Dean - is ice skating the latest craze among School children? 6

In the running

Richard Garner looks at the candidates for the National Union of Teachers' executive. 8

Looking back

Biddy Passmore recalls issues and stories of 1983. 9



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Where do we go from here?

Poised on the threshold of a new year – and 1984 to boot – it is time again to take a Janus look. Nineteen eighty-three has been an eventful year on the education front. A general election came and went and Mrs Thatcher's Government, the most ideologically committed right-wing government since the war, was confirmed in office for another four or five years.

While education was not a prime issue in the election, it occupies an important place in the scheme of social engineering which Mrs Thatcher's kind of conservatism is engaged in. This doesn't of itself guarantee education any money but it does mean that educational strategies are expected to harmonize with the Government's larger aims of encouraging and articulating the aspirations of the thriving, upwardly-mobile, self-propelled sections of the community.

Education holds the key to many of the ambitions of this political constituency, and by extension, to any approach to national recovery rooted in its philosophy. All Sir Keith Joseph's decisions about education policy have to be read in relation to this larger scenario and all the controversial things it implies for the progressive diminution of the Welfare State.

Paradoxically, however, it was not until Sir Keith Joseph was persuaded to drop vouchers – privatization par excellence – and put student loans on the back burner, that he began to come to terms with the Department of Education and Science. This happened in the months immediately before the general election, and was sealed in its immediate aftermath by Mrs Thatcher's uncompromising dismissal of vouchers as impractical.

Sir Keith, who a year ago seemed like a detached observer bored by the detail of an education system which he hoped to dismantle, has now begun to enjoy the job of Secretary of State and shows signs of becoming a committed participant in the process of educational change. He has been seen in the corridors of the 16-plus examinations, on the reform of the 16-plus examinations, on certain kinds of in-service training and on the follow up of Circular 6/61 on the curriculum, is evidence of renewed enthusiasm.

So is the Bill now going through Parliament which will give the DES its own small development fund, adding another modest lever to the Secretary of State's hand. Getting Ministers to see the merit of this was Sir James Hamblin's parting achievement before he retired as permanent secretary in April – one which his successor will have occasion to thank him for.

Rates: bleak outlook

In many respects, 1983 was a better year for education than there was any reason to expect a year ago. Cynical observers may argue that this is always likely: that the onset of a general election always leads to a modest loosening of the reins (and, therefore, some modest improvement) which is brought to an end within months of a new Chancellor establishing his grip. Be that as it may, the combined effect of a little "overspending" by most local authorities, and a lower than budgeted inflation rate, has meant that there has been a bit more money about at the margin in 1983 than had been expected and education has been one of the beneficiaries.

Looking ahead to 1984 there is no reason why this



Rate-capping threat to staffing

1984: what prospects for rates, YTS and exams? state of affairs should continue in the light of intensified penalties and the odious rate-capping Bill which has now begun its parliamentary Odyssey. If there is still more belt-tightening to look forward to, it will take some time to get chapter and verse. The next HMI survey of local spending and educational provision will reflect the relatively buoyant 1983 scene, not the colder reality of 1984.

What next for YTS?

Concerning the rate of the Youth Training Scheme. For a variety of reasons which still await a definitive analysis, the YTS got off in September to a more limited start than the MSC had planned. The number of young people taking up places is well down on the planned figure of 460,000 – there is a shortfall of about 150,000.

It is going to be extremely important to watch what happens now. Will the Manpower Services Commission's blueprint be realized, notwithstanding the early teething troubles? Will the YTS, as the MSC hopes, become the normal method of entry into employment for all who leave full-time education at the end of the compulsory period, or will it, like the Youth Opportunities Programme before it, end up as just another ad hoc measure to sanitize youth unemployment?

A great deal is going to depend on what is happening on the employment front generally. Most forecasters assume that present levels of unemployment will continue for the next year or two. If, on the other hand, the slight improvement noted in recent months is continued, and if the reason why fewer YTS candidates have been enrolled is because rather more young people have obtained ordinary jobs, there will be a great temptation to forget about long-term plans to create a broad base of vocational preparation on which to build a better system of industrial and commercial education and training, and a rapid reversion to chronic Micawberism.

Biting the bullet

Nineteen eighty four will be the year when the Secretary of State takes critical decisions on both 16-plus and A level reform. There have been plenty of indications that Sir Keith is keen on the process of tightening up the examination syllabuses which the 16-plus criteria exercise involves, but that, in his heart of hearts, he has no liking for a genuine combined system of examining which sweeps away GCE O levels and the overtones of respectability which they carry. He may yet shy away from the scheme which the Secondary Examinations Council has now endorsed when he comes to give his decision next summer.

If he does this will lead to a major confrontation with many of the institutions and individuals which have invested so much time and effort in this business. Sir Keith may think Sir Wilfred Cockcroft, the chairman of the Secondary Examinations Council is right, and conclude that he can have the benefits of the criteria exercise without the political pill of a unified system. He may be wrong – there would undoubtedly be very widespread disappointment and frustration, and the main beneficiaries in the long term might be those who argue with plenty of logic on their side that an external examination at 16-plus is a peculiar British obsession which could safely be replaced by other methods of assessment.

A teachers' charter?

One theme which has received attention from Sir Keith throughout his sojourn at Elizabeth House has been the quality of teachers and teaching. He has inveighed against bad teachers and inadequate heads. He has urged better management techniques to root out the des. His approach has often been tactless and ill-considered – the North of England teachers' union, who he speaks again next week, has

incompetent – but in putting teacher quality at the top of his list, he is paying the teachers the compliment of believing that what they do, and how well they do it, really matters. Unfortunately, he does not seem to accept that teaching is an art as well as a craft and sometimes seems to suppose that all that is needed is to give teachers clearer instructions and monitor their activities more closely to release their best work.

A real test of Sir Keith's strength as a Minister, and his insight as a man, will come in his response to the negotiations between the teaching associations and the local education authority representatives for a new structure of pay and conditions. The signs are that these negotiations are going well: that there is a meeting of minds and a measure of agreement about how things could go forward. But crucial questions of money have yet to be broached and they can only be resolved with some help from Sir Keith.

Nineteen eighty four will be the year in which Sir Keith has to face up to the cost of quality. Professional standards do not depend, primarily, on managerial oversight or monitoring (though if the current negotiations are successful such assessment may be improved) but on the internalized expectations of the professionals themselves which make high standards their own reward. But this means getting and keeping good people and treating them well in the responsible jobs they do: it means putting the DES weight behind the present negotiations and winning the necessary support for the outcome.

Second opinion

Time to talk to teachers about TVEI

The Government has committed itself to spending £7m in 1983-84 on the first stage of the pilot Technical and Vocational Education Initiative, and £20m on the first full year of the second stage. In total the TVEI will be costing well over £100m in government expenditure. One would therefore think that such a cost-conscious government as the present one would be determined that the scheme should be a success. However, already there are signs of its implementation of serious weaknesses.

When the first phase of the TVEI (then known as the NTVEI – New Technical and Vocational Education Initiative) was launched in January 1983, the letter from the chairman of the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) to directors of education in all I.e.s.s in England and Wales ended with the comment:

Finally, it will be important that the projects selected by the commission have the support of those directly concerned in the locality, and that in bringing their schemes into operation I.e.s.s consult through their normal processes the organizations primarily involved.

A subsequent letter from the MSC clarified the reference to having "the support of those directly concerned in the locality", making it clear that consultations with the teacher associations was essential if projects were to be successful.

Despite this, at its June conference on the TVEI, the union was informed that a number of the 14 I.e.s.s whose submissions had been selected had no consultation with the teachers' union. The union again raised the issue of consultation, asking for assurances that I.e.s.s would be given adequate time for preparation to allow for this. The MSC indicated that this would be the case.

Nevertheless, despite this assurance and the reiteration of the need for consultation with teachers at the national steering group meeting on September 1, the letter from the MSC chairman to directors of education, announcing the launch of the second phase of the TVEI, in September 1983, included no reference to the need for consultation with teachers.

The NUT nationally has offered both support and advice to its divisional secretaries to aid them in the consultations during the period of preparation by I.e.s.s of submissions for the second phase. It appears, however, from the results of a recent survey carried out by the union, that a number have not been consulted at all and of those that have, some have been given only two or three days' notice of consultative meetings, and further more have been supplied with only minimal information about the proposals. The closing date for submissions to the MSC (December 12) has now passed. Nevertheless, the union believes that the MSC should instruct those I.e.s.s which have not consulted properly to do so before they will be accepted for consideration by the national steering group.

The union has so far taken a very positive approach to the TVEI. At this year's annual conference in Jersey at Easter, a resolution broadly in support of the TVEI was passed, with various provisos including the need for consultation. Since the future success of the TVEI depends largely on retaining the cooperation and commitment of teachers, it is obvious that they must be involved at every stage, including during the preparation of proposals.

The question is how much longer can the NUT and the teaching profession as a whole be expected to support the TVEI if their views continue to be ignored.

Alan Evans

Alan Evans is Senior Official in the Education Department of the National Union of Teachers

NAHT seeks way to stop term time travel among Asians

The National Association of Head Teachers wants urgent action to be taken to curb the annual flow of thousands of Asian children who travel during term time to visit relatives in the Indian sub-continent.

The union has decided to seek meetings with the Commission for Racial Equality and the Department of Education and Science to discuss the problem.

An unofficial estimate suggests that as many as 10,000 Asian youngsters annually opt out of the classroom for trips abroad which can vary from two or three months to several years (see TES, December 9).

The headteachers are concerned about the effect on the children's education and the unfair position it puts a head in when dealing with other children.

Heads have a duty to uphold the principle of compulsory and regular attendance at school. Yet they appear powerless to take action against Asian parents who take or send their children abroad for long periods.

Mr David Hart, general secretary of the NAHT, plans to contact the Commission for Racial Equality to see if it can produce any national statistics on the extent of the problem. He hopes that the commission and his union will discuss ways to persuade Asian parents that allowing youngsters to be out of school for long spells is damaging for their education.

He will also be discussing with the DES the "anomaly" in the present situation which appears to have one set of rules for Asian children and another for home-based children.

The problems faced by schools are summed up by NAHT member Mr Ray Honeyford, head of Drummond Middle School, Bradford.

Mr Honeyford estimates that at least 1,000 children in the area are sent on family visits to the Indian sub-continent

and, as a result, suffer serious interruption to their schooling. In his own school, he estimates that at least one-third of the pupils – about 170 – have been affected.

When the children return, their command of English has declined, he says, and they have to attend a special language centre at extra expense.

Writing in the NAHT journal, Mr Honeyford discusses the difficult position heads are placed in when trying to tackle the problem of school attendance. The attitude of the DES, he says, is "curious".

Its legal department, he says, argues that, since a child, whether in Pakistan or India, is not resident in this country, he, or she, is therefore outside the English local authority area. Therefore the local education authority has no power to prosecute for non-attendance.

The official view also appears to be that since Asian parents seek a school place when their child returns to Britain, the motive was not to keep the child off school.

"The logic of this sort of reasoning defeats me," Mr Honeyford says. The parents concerned are British citizens permanently resident in Britain. They own or rent property, vote in elections and draw family allowances.

"How can I, as a British citizen, be asked to leave this country?" he asks. Mr Honeyford warns that, apart from the ethical, educational and legal questions raised by the practice, there is the even more fundamental question of the effect it might have on the public's perception of the school system.

"Certain of the indigenous parents in my school look askance at what they consider to be a racially determined attendance policy," he says.

Secretaries still on strike

A strike by school secretaries in Sandwell – which caused the cancellation of some mock examinations – looks set to continue into next term.

The 250 secretaries, who are members of the local government officers' union, NALGO, went on strike at the beginning of November after the Labour-controlled West Midlands authority stopped their pay for refusing to answer telephones in support of a salary regarding claim.

Talks were taking place between the union and local authority officers this week but Mr Eric Faux, Sandwell branch secretary of NALGO, was not optimistic about them.

He accused the authority of "intimidating" the strikers by sending them letters laying them to tear up their union cards and return to work.

The mock examinations have been cancelled because both the TUC-affiliated teachers' unions, the National Association of Teachers and the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers, refused to do work normally done by secretaries. This includes typing mock examination papers.

More apply for campus places

University applications remain higher than they were at this time last year, although there are signs that candidates have been getting their forms in earlier than usual, according to the latest figures from the Universities Central Council on Admissions.

With about two thirds of the expected applications in by December 1, the total was up by 3 per cent compared with the same date last year. The rise among overseas candidates has been particularly marked.

So far there have been "substantial decreases" in applications for French, maths (excluding computing), mechanical engineering, dentistry, geology, and agriculture.

Tenure still in firing line

by David Jobbins

Ministers are maintaining their determination to break university academics' tenure, and have confirmed that the Privy Council has been advised to take every opportunity to include dismissal on grounds of redundancy in charters submitted to it for revision.

In a Commons written answer on the eve of the Christmas recess, Mr Peter Brooke, under secretary for higher education, confirmed that Sir Keith Joseph, the Education Secretary, has "advised the Privy Council that in his view" provision for dismissal on grounds of redundancy should be made whenever institutions petition for a new or supplementary charter.

At least four institutions have charter changes locked in the system because they are unwilling to make the changes which the Privy Council is demanding.

They are Sussex, University College

Aberystwyth, London University Institute of Education and the new University of Ulster.

But an MP is to challenge the Privy Council to say whether it has reached its view on tenure independently or whether it simply followed Sir Keith's advice.

Dr John Marek, Labour MP for Wrexham, said: "The question is whether the Privy Council's arm is being twisted. I think it is."

"The Privy Council is an independent body and while there is nothing to stop Sir Keith giving it his views, the Privy Council should tell us whether it is taking his views into account and if so why."

"It is clear in practice the Privy Council has accepted Sir Keith's advice, and it now owes universities a duty to say why it has done so."

He is to question the relevant mini-

sters on the constitutional issues and to write to Sir Neville Lee, secretary to the Privy Council.

Dr Marek was, until the June election, a lecturer in applied mathematics at University College Aberystwyth.

Mr John Akker, deputy general secretary of the Association of University Teachers, attacked the timing of the statement by Mr Brooke as "provocative".

"Universities are only just recovering from the aftermath of the 1981 cuts and the statement demonstrates quite clearly how the Government wishes to use the Privy Council for political purposes which have nothing to do with the proper running of the universities."

"Most universities would, if left to themselves, wish to retain tenure and this has been shown by recent votes in many senates." – *TES*

Head quits because of ILEA 'zealots'

by Nick Wood



Julia Cleverdon, (pictured above) director of education for the Industrial Society, has been selected as the final member of the Schools Curriculum Development Committee.

She said: "Everyone who works in industry and commerce should be delighted by this decision. It demonstrates that at last those who organise work in our schools have recognised that school leavers must have had an education that will equip them for the world of work. The future of this country depends on industry and education working together."

Mrs Joan Main, chairman of Wiltshire education committee, has been appointed to serve in place of Dr Barbara Marsh, chairman of Shropshire education committee.

Super teacher's bid page 8

Radice charge

Lady Cox and Dr John Marks, authors of a controversial study on exam results in selective and comprehensive schools, had "fixed the evidence to produce the results which confirmed their own particular prejudice", Mr Giles Radice, Labour education spokesman, said in a question to the Education Secretary in the Commons on December 20.

He asked for an assurance that the Government would not give public money to fund further research by Cox and Marks, of the National Council for Educational Standards.

But Sir Keith Joseph rejected his allegation and refused to give the assurance. The area of disagreement between Cox and Marks and DES statisticians was "one that occurs with statisticians", he said, and he would consider all proposals for research on their merits.

The Education Secretary also expressed his regret that the officials who had advised him on this research and other subjects had been accused of acting with political motives. He was satisfied that his officials tendered objective advice.

10,000 appeals

Some 10,000 appeals by parents dissatisfied with school allocations were heard by local committees this year, Sir Keith Joseph, the Education Secretary, told the Commons last week. Of these 3,500 were successful.

The success rate – 35 per cent – is fractionally higher than last year, when there were about 9,000 appeals, of which 3,000 found in the parents' favour.

Court ruling

Although it was a schoolmaster's right and duty to control and, if necessary, chastise pupils in his care, he must act reasonably, the Appeal Court has ruled.

A jury would decide whether any force used was reasonable, ruled Mr Justice Nolan (sitting with Lord Justice May and Mr Justice Boreham) in dismissing an appeal by a teacher, Mr Murty Taylor, against his conviction for assaulting a 12-year-old pupil.

Belgium shows the way

Belgium may not always have been thought of as a country where the frontiers of education are being rolled back, but recent legislation has given it the highest school-leaving age in Europe, and looks like making it a test-bed for ideas about the 14-19 age group.

The new Compulsory Education Act puts up the leaving age from 14 to 18, in a phased introduction due to be

complete by 1988. This, however, is not quite as dramatic as it sounds since part-time education alternating with on-the-job training will meet the needs of the law.

What the country has done, in effect, is what so many others would like to do but cannot – that is pull together all its tangled strands of training, apprenticeships and vocational education into a coherent, and education-based, legal framework. Of course, the framework is the easiest part, and although the move has wide support in Belgium, people are well aware that in practice all schemes like this which owe their political backing to high youth unemployment figures are inclined to promise more than they can fulfill.

The Government has ambitious plans for a major reform of vocational education, but its budget is vague and

its timetable short. Under the timing of the Act, major changes will need to happen within the next nine months, and there are inevitably, therefore, fears among parents and employers, that the implementation of the reforms will be patchy and incomplete. Yet as this country's experience with the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative has shown, a tight timetable is not necessarily all bad. It is possible to do a surprising amount of good work in a hurry, when the mind is sufficiently concentrated.

The success of Belgium's plans is likely to turn on whether enough of the industry-based sandwich courses, which will be the first choice of many of the new stay-at-home, can be provided in time and to the required quality. A pilot scheme within the textile industry (*TES* December 12) has worked well. Trainees, whose families

receive family allowance while they are at college, are paid the full rate for the job when they are working, and are guaranteed work for a year after finishing their course.

It is hoped to make these elements common to all schemes, but the pilot project had a hand-picked intake and much attention lavished on it by all concerned, other training schemes are unlikely to be so lucky.

...no comment

"The fact that she has a career at all owes to her mother. If it hadn't been for her, I would have probably ended up teaching English just like her." Morgan Partridge, star of *Flamingo Road*, in *Sunday (The News of the World Magazine)* November 1983.

PLATFORM

Never mind the system

Gerald Haigh sees the beginning of 1984 as an appropriate date to take stock of teaching's priorities and puts in a plea for more content and a lot less structure

When *The Day After* really comes, and the severe looking, green men in purple kalfans gather round their golden telescopes on the far edge of the galaxy and contemplate the fragment of flowing pumice which once was Planet Earth, at least one of them is sure to say: "The problem was, they believed in systems."

Our faith in systems seems absolute. Without a proper system of pre and post-natal care we cannot successfully be born. Without a proper penal system we cannot retain possession of our wallets and videos after dark. And unless we stuff the pinnacles, skies and oceans with an unbelievably lethal system of demonic weapons, then we cannot successfully live in peace with one another.

The very word "systematic", which in civilisation founded upon imagination and inspiration would be a deadly insult, is for us a term of approbation. The world is now run by people who cannot move a muscle unless they can look on a chart and see what is going to happen next.

If you doubt this, or are tempted to believe that education is in some way proof against the trend, then consider the school which recently advertised a Scale Four post for a "Timetabler". What bothered me about this was not so much the thing itself - the realization that our honourable calling has come to such a pass - but the thought of some human beings sitting in a room deciding to appoint a "Timetabler" without once feeling the urge to scream and beat their heads against the wall. Still

there is residual satisfaction in knowing that somebody is supporting the "Orwell was right" lobby.

The systemist philosophy manifests itself in plenty of other ways. For example, the exotic belief that educational standards can be improved by systematically testing children in a narrow range of skills currently flourishes in Croydon. This is like trying to prevent heart disease by taking everybody's pulse, with the added refinement that if too many of the pulses turn out to be dicky, then a few heart specialists can be sacked to encourage the others.

Another characteristic of systemism is the principle of conservation by sub-logical retrogressive holistic system substitution. What this means is that where a system has been shown to be inadequate, then it has to be replaced entirely by another, even if the only available replacement is an older system which was even worse.

This explains why people who are fed up with cars start getting enthusiastic about trams, canal boats and walking. Thus in education we are treated to the spectacle of people with normal haircuts calmly considering the reintroduction of 11-plus selection. Mind you, in the next incarnation it seems to be only grammar schools that are

coming back - at any rate you never hear anyone mention secondary schools.

It seems to me, too, that a systemist red herring may be flopping about in the recent HMI report on 9 to 13 schools. A fair number of the criticisms made are surely applicable to any kind of school containing children of that age. "In English and maths the work was often narrowly conceived. Comprehension, grammar and spelling formed a considerable part of English" and so on. What is under discussion here is the whole question of how we teach children in the 9 to 13 group. It would be unsurprising but still very odd if the report were used simply as evidence upon which to base a further reshuffle of the system without the direction of any attention to the detail of what is to be done at the level of teacher and pupil.

The systemist preoccupation is now completely endemic at all levels. If we wish to raise reading standards, we try to think of a good system which will do the trick. If we want to improve the lot of children with special educational needs, we can apparently only do it with the aid of a towering bureaucratic procedure. What should be a matter of cajoling, touching, persuading, loving and teaching is now all too often gathered up into the world of forms,

charts and conferences.

I suggest that what we need to do in 1984, of all years, is look again at what we mean by "teaching" and "education" and then vow with solemnity and vehemence that we will resist all further attempts on the part of the people with briefcases to subvert the transcendent purposes of our calling. The point is that education is not essentially about systems at all. It is concerned with imagination and creativity. The prime purpose of the teacher is to liberate the imagination so that pupils may grow and mature as creative and autonomous people. Good teachers have always been able to do this, and will continue to do so regardless of where they find themselves. What is important about a teacher is not what system he works in, or uses, or believes in, but whether he can, at that narrow glowing point where all the systems and methods converge, strike sparks from the pupils around.

It follows very clearly from this that what those who run the education service ought to be doing almost to the exclusion of everything else is helping the teacher to strike those sparks. Thus, for example, they should be sending him on weekend courses where he is allowed and encouraged to

do his own work - to paint, write, do mathematics, build treeshouses and play music. They should not, on the other hand, be spending precious resources on sending him away to listen to lectures about timetabling, or Acts of Parliament. Still less should he be subjected to courses on management techniques. Compare the performance of teachers and managers over the past 20 years and then consider who should be the lecturers and who the lectured at.

Likewise, the aim should be as far as possible to remove from the head and the teacher in school those chores and procedures which detract from the maintenance of the flow of creative energy. The question is not so much whether this can be done as whether the will exists to do it. Systems, after all, are very earnest entities - humours, arrogant and depressingly serious in intent. This means that they have the power to inveigle innocent folk, and are very difficult to get rid of.

If you doubt me, try suggesting in your staffroom that it might be worth considering how to run a school with no timetable and little formal structure. Teachers would wait in their classrooms and teach children who chose to appear during the day. Whether you think this is at least a tenable starting point for a debate on how a school could work on the one hand, or whether you dismiss the notion out of hand as insane and unworkable on the other, is a good measure of how thoroughly you have been bamboozled by the systemist!

NEWS

It's a word, it's a name it's . . . Super-person

by Richard Garner

A primary school has renamed Super-person "super-person" in an effort to teach peace studies and sexual equality in one fell swoop.

The way the new genderless hero has helped is highlighted in a document produced by Labour-controlled Avon County Council setting out guidelines for the way peace education should be taught in schools.

It gives several anonymous examples of how schools have already introduced the subject and says that one primary school took advantage of the fact that children had returned from their Christmas holidays eager to talk about Superman, which they had seen on television.

The document, *Peace Education - Guidelines for primary and secondary schools*, says the headteacher asked pupils: "What does Superman mean?" "The first part of the word was taken first - super - and the children were asked to give other words as alternative meanings. The words the children gave were - terrific, fantastic, great, lovely, good."

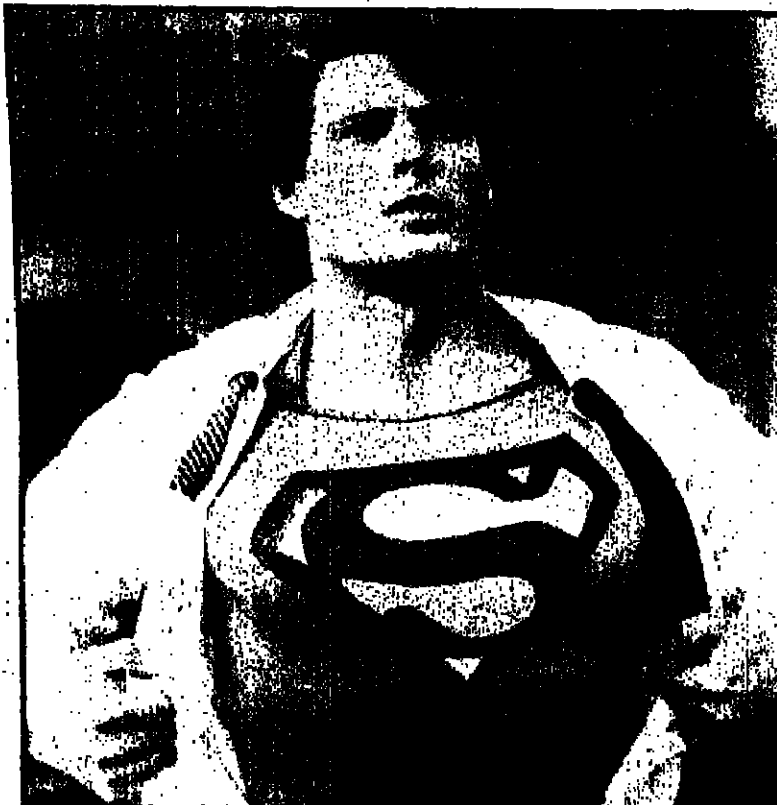
"Then the children were asked how Superman behaved. Although they were eager to talk about his strength, it was quite clear from the discussion that followed that the children were very aware he did good things."

"The children then gave the words to describe Superman - thoughtful, strong, kind, caring, helpful, gentle, loving etc. The children had enjoyed the discussion, and when they returned to the classrooms were eager to talk to their own teachers about it."

The next morning, the document continues, the children were asked what they could do to become a super-person - "changed to include the girls - and they quickly responded with 'to be kind and loving, to help one another, to be gentle, etc.'"

"It was obvious that the children wanted to identify themselves with 'Super person'."

It goes on to say that the label "super" was then applied to placed and things around the school, and the



children discussed how they could be "super" in their everyday lives.

The document says that discussion about the nuclear arms issue is only one aspect of peace education.

It adds: "In fact, peace education does not advocate appeasement nor does it advocate a pacifist attitude. It does reject the eager willingness to resolve all issues by force and argues that in spite of vast experience and sometimes overwhelming difficulties involved, every effort should be made to seek resolution of conflict in non-violent ways."

It says that "bias" is inevitable in that all teachers bring their own perceptions, understandings, and

values to the topics and issues they teach - but concludes that it is "no more likely in peace education than in any other subject dealing with human behaviour."

"Peace education rejects the aim of political indoctrination and this has to be shown to be the case in practice," it adds. "It is no more open to the charge of planned or actual political indoctrination than any other subject on the curriculum."

The document adds: "If respect for peace and peaceful behaviour is not implicit (as well as explicit) in our teaching, the message the student is likely to receive is that peace, as a value, is not important."

I.e.a.s. opt for peace studies

by Nick Wood

Two in three I.e.a.s. say that peace studies are taught in their schools.

The nuclear arms race, violence and war, international understanding, disarmament and the Government's defence policy are some of the topics most often covered in the classroom.

These are the main findings of a survey of authorities throughout the United Kingdom. Ninety-three replied to a questionnaire sent out by researchers at Lancaster University.

A quarter of the authorities said that peace studies appeared as a subject on the school timetable. A further two-fifths said that it was taught through other parts of the curriculum.

The researchers, Dr Paul Smoker, director of the Richardson Institute for Conflict and Peace Research at the university, and Professor Hanna-Fred Rathenow of the Berlin Technical University, report that the political complexion of I.e.a.s. has a major bearing on whether peace studies is taught in schools.

One in three Labour-controlled authorities timetable the subject in their schools - three times more than the number of Conservative-run authorities taking this approach.

But when direct and indirect teaching of peace studies are taken together, schools in Labour I.e.a.s. are slightly more likely to cover the subject than those in Tory areas.

Surprisingly, peace studies is most widely taught in authorities where no one party has overall control.

The sharpest political divide arises from whether or not an I.e.a.s. has set up a curriculum working party on peace studies. One in three of the Labour councils have, or intend to set up, such a body, compared with none of the Conservative councils.

Only six I.e.a.s. said that they have prepared peace packs for schools.

Peace education in Great Britain: Some Results of a Survey, Richardson Institute for Conflict and Peace Research, Price £1.50, 1983.

Fixed-term contracts campaign

The National Union of Teachers is to lead a campaign for a change in the law to give greater protection for teachers engaged on fixed-term contracts.

The union has been worried about the growth in the number of fixed-term contracts used by local education authorities. Figures given to the union's annual conference showed that the vast majority of these contracts were being given to women teachers - 4,125 as opposed to 178 to men.

Now the union's executive is to urge the TUC to press for amendments to existing employment protection legislation to stop employers using the contracts as a means of engaging employees while contemplating redundancy at a future time. It is tabling a motion for the TUC women's conference next year, claiming that this form of contract is "inherent indirect discrimination against women employees."

The NUT wants all employees on fixed-term contracts, or in temporary or part-time employment, to be given the same protection by the law as full-time employees.

In particular, it wants the TUC's general council to campaign to remove all existing qualifications in respect of employment rights - such as a limitation on the number of hours worked. The NUT also wants to remove the provision whereby teachers on fixed-term contracts have their rights to redundancy and unfair dismissal compensation waived.

In addition, the NUT plans to urge the women's conference - to be held in Torquay in March - to campaign for courses in technology to be made equally available to both girls and boys.

Their motion also calls on local education authorities, school governing bodies, parent/teacher organizations, the Campaign for the Advancement of State Education and other bodies "to promote debate and discussion among parents in order to encourage a social climate that would be conducive to girls choosing curriculum and career paths according to their own inclinations."

Richard Garner

Rampton racism theory disputed by new survey

by Nick Wood

New evidence casts doubt on the central conclusion of the controversial Rampton Report - that West Indian children do badly at school because of "unintentional racism" on the part of their teachers.

Research by Mr Geoffrey Short, a psychology lecturer at New College, Durham, who conducted a survey of primary teachers, concludes that this finding is not supported by the facts. Teachers do not make sweeping generalizations about children on the basis of their ethnic background and label all West Indians as dull and uncooperative.

"An indictment of unintentional racism is difficult to uphold in relation to West Indian children and seems a singularly inappropriate description of the way teachers perceive Asian children," Mr Short writes in the latest issue of *The Durham and Newcastle Research Review*.

In a later interview, he said: "English teachers don't have racial stereotypes, or, if they are aware of them, they don't operate according to them. They treat each child on his merits."

"I am very sceptical of Rampton's allegation. Based on the impression they got from talking to teachers and West Indian parents, that everybody brought up in our society will adopt cultural stereotypes unthinkingly and act in accordance with them."

Commenting on the fact that West Indian children are five or six times less likely to get five or more O level passes than whites and Asians, Mr Short said it was "far too easy" for their parents to attribute such underachievement to

racism among teachers. Some other factor may be responsible.

His conclusions stem from the answers to 31-point questionnaires distributed to 65 teachers at 11 primary schools in working class areas of a London borough. The teachers were asked to comment on the behaviour, motivation, intelligence and academic attainments of white, West Indian and Asian children, aged 5 to 12.

Unlike earlier research in this field, the teachers gave separate information on boys and girls.

Analysis of the replies failed to reveal any rigid divisions along racial lines. For instance, although the teachers said that West Indian boys were less hard-working than their English counterparts, they described their classroom behaviour as broadly similar - a judgment that conflicts with the racial stereotype of West Indians as uncooperative pupils.

On the other hand, popular perceptions were borne out in the case of girls - West Indians being seen as both recalcitrant and poorly motivated in comparison with their English and Asian counterparts.

Mr Short says that this inconsistency in teachers' perceptions poses a powerful challenge to the charge that they are slaves to a cultural ethos that denigrates West Indians.

Comparison of English and Asian children also threw up attitudes running against the grain of racial stereotypes. Contrary to expectation, Asian girls were said to have a more

serious attitude to work than their English counterparts. As expected, they were also better behaved, but this did not mean they were more enjoyable to teach. Teachers found them less sociable than English girls and lacking in a sense of humour.

Nor did teachers uncritically subscribe to the view that West Indian children have a special talent for sport and music. They said that they were no more musical than whites and Asians and made important distinctions between boys and girls when it came to sport. West Indian girls do have an edge in this area - West Indian boys do not, the teachers said.

"The policy implications of this type of study depend crucially upon whether the evidence is an accurate reflection of classroom reality or, as Rampton claims, the product of a collective imagination warped by groundless but widespread prejudice," Mr Short writes.

"While the present study cannot establish the truth of the racial profiles it describes, it does offer circumstantial evidence that cautions against a wholesale acceptance of 'unintentional racism' as the major influence on teachers' perceptions."

"For example, the sex differences that distinguished the classroom behaviour comparisons involving West Indian children have no parallel in any cultural stereotype, and thus, if teachers are influenced more by sociocultural attitudes than by their own classroom experiences, the sex differences should not have emerged."



The Home Office is likely to decide soon on a deportation date for eight-year-old Nezha Benkhlef and her mother after the failure of their second appeal against deportation. Though Nezha is a Moroccan, she has spent most of her life in England, and staff at George Eliot Junior School, St John's Wood, London, are among those who have supported her application to remain here. Mrs Benkhlef lost her right to stay after her marriage broke up and her husband returned to Algeria. "People say we must be sent to Morocco," Nezha said. "My friends at school come from many places, some are Chinese, Indian, African, Greek. They can all stay. I have never lived in Morocco. I don't understand why I must go there." Mrs Benkhlef was particularly worried by the sort of education Nezha would face - overcrowded classes, rote learning, harsh punishment, and an unfamiliar language.

NEWS

Authorities must sell or raid to pay for projects

by Biddy Passmore

Most local education authorities who want to start new capital projects next year will have to pay for them by selling surplus buildings and land - or raising the allocations for other services.

The Government has told English education authorities they may spend up to £300.1m on building and major equipment in 1984-85. That is an increase of only £5.5m on the current year's allocation and all but £40m of it is already committed.

The allocations, sent out before Christmas in letters to I.e.a.s., were hailed by many councils as inadequate, especially where school rolls are falling or growing fast.

The Department of Education says it has been possible to allow for new spending only where it has been pre-empted by "exceptional circumstances apply." The Education Secretary has tried to give priority to new work on further education projects, school projects connected with the removal of surplus places, and computers and other equipment for further education.

But the letter reminds councils of their "freedoms" under the 1980 Act which should enable them to finance further projects.

Governors' chairman

The governors of Highbury Grove school have ousted their Tory chairman and voted in a parent governor with no political affiliations, in a move which some observers are saying could have a significant effect on the atmosphere and developments in this prominent north London comprehensive.

The new chairman, Mr Peter Saunders, is thought likely to offer a tougher challenge to the school over issues such as the exam results of average and below average children.

Teacher training places lost

The governors of De La Salle College, Manchester, have decided to keep the college open despite the loss of its teacher training places.

Since August, 1982, the Catholic college has fought to keep its teacher training places, which represented well over 60 per cent of college academic activity. The college was confirmed by the Education Secretary, at the end of September.

In deciding to continue to recruit for its diversified courses, the governors have refused two other options, that of closing or of remaining open but suspending intake of students until the outcome of the current review of colleges by the National Advisory Board.

Rule stops candidate

A move to allow Ms Sue Adams, a part-time teacher in Bexley, to stand as a candidate in the elections for the executive of the National Union of Teachers next year has failed.

"The executive turned down a motion which sought to declare that the union's rules did not prevent her from standing. Instead, leaders of the NUT will press to change the union's rules to allow part-timers to stand following next year's conference. The Equal Opportunities Commission has said the rule preventing Ms Adams from standing is a "clear-cut" case of discrimination."

Ms Adams had been nominated to stand as one of the candidates for election to the four seats for Outer London on the union's executive.

Staff threaten to fight jobs axe

by Richard Garner

Teachers in Lancashire have given a warning that they may resort to industrial action over a plan by the county council to cut 66 teaching posts by the beginning of next term.

Members of the Lancashire division of the National Union of Teachers say they are opposed to axing teachers' jobs in the middle of the school year - and fear that remedial education and examination classes may be affected by the decision. If this happens, they may refuse to cover classes taken by the teacher whose jobs have disappeared.

The decision to cut back was taken by Labour councillors after they had been told that the authority had 66 extra teachers on its books - and was in danger of suffering severe financial penalties from the Government next year if the resulting £400,000 "over-spending" was allowed to continue.

Mr Frank Shuttleworth, general secretary of the Lancashire division of the NUT, said: "We recognize that in many ways this administration has attempted to improve the quality of education our children receive, but to cut the number of teachers in a school in the middle of a school year will have terrible consequences."

"How can a headteacher plan a school's work in such circumstances? How can we improve the reading of our children when special remedial classes have to be taken away? Are O level and CSE examination classes to disappear from parts of a school's timetable?"

Mr Andrew Collier, Lancashire's chief education officer, said: "It doesn't mean taking teachers away from examination classes for youngsters who are doing examinations next summer. There may be one or two circumstances where in ideal circumstances we would not have lost a teacher, but we believe this move is in our long-term interests to contain our expenditure."

He added: "We are also not setting out to remove remedial teachers from our schools." The cut would be achieved by not filling posts which became vacant as teachers left.

No action to be taken on mock hanging

A teacher who organized a mock hanging in school will not face disciplinary action. Darren Wixon, aged 15, was photographed with a noose round his neck by Mr Robert Hooper, the teacher, during an art lesson at Tavistock Comprehensive, West Devon. A girl pupil held the rope taut as others watched - and when the picture was published in a national newspaper, Devon Education Authority launched an inquiry.

A special committee has now decided at a meeting in Exeter that no disciplinary action should be taken. The chief education officer, Mr Joslyn Owen, said the committee had taken a very serious view of the incident, and reminded teachers of the dangers of overstepping the line of "public taste and acceptability."

NEWS

Law class weakness in social work course

Only two students out of 50 were attending a law class when inspectors looked at the certificate of qualification in social work at Bristol Polytechnic.

The course was generally found to "offer a sound and appropriate education and training in social work." The quality of much of the teaching was high. The one real weakness was the compulsory law element for which the average attendance in the course was only five or six students. It was clear that it was not just the result of student apathy. "It was claimed by the students that there was little rapport with the group and that the teaching methodology was wholly inappropriate for a course of this nature." Members of the law staff had no real formal contact with the course.

HMI recommended that a law element should remain within the course, but the existing arrangement should be completely rethought.

Worsborough Infant School, Barnsley is described by the Inspectors as "a very good infant school", in spite of considerable instability in its staffing. The curriculum included language, mathematics, music, art and craft, physical education, religious education and environmental studies. Cross curricular links were carefully planned and allowed the introduction of other subjects: their good record keeping, and much of the learning was based on first hand experiences.

"Standards of achievement and presentation of work are generally high. The children make good progress in reading and many write well, particularly when their writing is based upon first hand experience. A good understanding of the broad range of mathematical work is achieved and children learn to use the skills which they acquire in other areas of work."

Good attention was given to help children understand moral and ethical issues, and they were introduced to material with religious content from the Bible and other sources.

"Through their behaviour in school and their evident concern for others, children demonstrate that they are learning and coming to understand much of that which the staff intend they should."

Relationships in the school were

HMI reports are available free of charge from the Department of Education and Science, Publications Despatch Centre, Honey Pot Lane, Stanmore, Middlesex HA7 1AZ. Also available from I.E.A.s.

excellent, and children responded well to high teacher expectations. Stalham High School, Norfolk is congratulated on being a happy and effective community. In spite of barely adequate accommodation, a shortage of books, and an unfavourable pupil-teacher ratio.

Only by careful planning could the

school manage with the classrooms and laboratories it has. History and geography was regularly taught in the dining room. Classroom and corridor space had been converted by self-help to provide a base for music. Even so the appearance and cleanliness of the school did credit to the pupils.

Though the provision of equipment was adequate there was a marked shortage of books and materials. "In many departments, books cannot generally be taken home for lack of copies, while in some departments pupils share books in class. There are shortages of consumable materials in some areas of practical work. These deficiencies are due partly to low expectations of the amount of money available, partly to low initial stocks in some departments and, sometimes, to concentration within a department upon one type of resource to the neglect of others."

The school's pupil-teacher ratio of 18 to one was poor compared with

most comprehensive of similar size and many of the teaching groups were large. The school had little room to manoeuvre to meet the needs of a wider ability range, following the school's change from a secondary-modern. "The staff, as a whole, is hard-pressed by the demands of the curriculum but it works effectively as a body within sound staffing structure. It is well led by the head and senior staff, and there is much evidence of goodwill and enterprise."

Reports have also been issued recently on: Stalham Middle School, Norfolk; St Marie's RC Junior School, Kirkby, Merseyside; Alice Ingham RC Primary School, Rochdale; Madingley Park Infants School, Basset, Kent; Heathfield County Secondary School, East Sussex; St Joseph's RC JMI School, Greenwich, ILEA; Margaret Stannish Infants School, Trowbridge, Wiltshire; St Giles RC Primary School, Cheshire; and Doveswell Court School, Cheltenham, Glos.

Skating along...

World ice dancing champions Jayne Torvill and Christopher Dean can count a former primary head among their greatest fans.

Along with other staff at Milford Primary, Nottingham, he used to organize weekly school trips to the local ice rink, and can claim to have introduced Jayne to skating at the age of nine.

Now retired in Yorkshire, he avidly collects their newspaper.

A world champion?

But for young skaters, training is still a matter of hard work against considerable odds. Ice skating is rarely encouraged as a school sport, usually appearing on the timetable only as a fifth or sixth-form option. And at Milford, Jayne Torvill's success is marked by a signed photograph in the schoolroom rather than a spot on the curriculum.

Even so there is no shortage of enthusiasm among children. Most of the members of the Nottingham Ice Club, which is involved in competitions, shows and training for the National Ice Skating awards, are aged between 8 and 14.

Ice rinks have to make money so the only time the skaters can have the ice to themselves is about 6a.m. or after 10p.m.

Training also needs financial commitment. A 15-minute lesson from a professional coach costs £2.30 in Nottingham, and booking a spot outside public hours is another £1.30 a time.

With considerable help through sponsorship by the local Labour-controlled council Torvill and Dean have been able to get over both problems, and now train at a luxury ice centre in West Germany at more accessible hours.

In Britain there are now signs that the situation for young ice skaters is improving.

Nottinghamshire began things by helping put ice skating on the curriculum ten years ago with the opening of a Sports Council-funded ice rink within a school. At the Sutton Centre, pupils can sweep the playing field for the rink at lunchtime, and it is used throughout the day by 30 schools in the area, the only limitation being transport to the site.

Nottinghamshire County Council describes the situation as "unique".

Report by Jo Newson

BEC praise for Leeds

Leeds schools are praised by the Inspectorate for the introduction of BEC general courses, a move described as "a very considerable innovative effort."

The BEC in schools scheme began in Leeds in 1979 and at the time of the inspection involved 340 students from 35 schools. In addition 212 students were on the same course at three further education colleges.

With a few exceptions the standard of tuition was good and was matched by the students' response. The Inspectorate said: "They work industriously at their studies, participating enthusiastically in class discussion and group work."

Though the teaching accommodation was adequate, some of the teaching areas were shabby, none too clean, and lacking in visual appeal. The boarding accommodation had several shortcomings, such as too few lavatories and handbasins, and there were various safety matters that required urgent attention.

The teachers had a generous attitude to the boys but had very limited professional experience; none had a recognized qualification in special education; and they were isolated both from the mainstream of education and from developments in the field of maladjustment. Although the number of teachers appeared adequate, they received so much time off that it had a serious effect on the timetable.

The distribution of subject periods was also unsatisfactory, resulting in some trouble and even quadruple periods. "Situations were observed where this resulted in teachers being unable to maintain pupils' attention and interest, with a good deal of consequent time-wasting."

In English, the Inspectors saw some good, sound teaching, backed up by a large variety of textbooks, but many of these were outdated. Most pupils produced a reasonable amount of written work, though poor spelling was a major problem. The present arrangements for remedial help were unsatisfactory.

The work in maths varied in quality. In some lessons there was useful discussion, the pupils studied hard and standards of presentation were good. In others the work was pedestrian.

No one on the staff had a designated childcare responsibility or any professional qualification in this work. "At present in spite of the commendable enthusiasm and goodwill of staff the overall child care programme remains mainly concerned with the control of the boys and their occupation throughout the day rather than with meeting their personal, emotional and social needs." Too much routine supervision was undertaken by prefects, who had problems of their own.

"Meal times are not social occasions and the only staff present patrol between tables while the children eat, as quickly as possible, food which is served to them in an unattractive and hasty manner. The dining rooms have a rather bleak and institutionalized aspect."

Home School Links HMI (Wales) Occasional paper available free from The Welsh Office Education Dept, Cathays Park, Cardiff

Concern at long spells in first form

An independent boarding school for the maladjusted where one boy spent five years in the first form attracts a long list of criticisms from the Inspectorate.

The Inspectors were worried that some pupils at Stinford School, Dorchester, Dorset spend long periods in the first form, and at the time of the inspection one boy had been there for five years. The school, for maladjusted boys aged 11 to 17, had no firmly established criteria for placing pupils and no authority within groups was wide.

Though the teaching accommodation was adequate, some of the teaching areas were shabby, none too clean, and lacking in visual appeal. The boarding accommodation had several shortcomings, such as too few lavatories and handbasins, and there were various safety matters that required urgent attention.

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"Meal times are not social occasions and the only staff present patrol between tables while the children eat, as quickly as possible, food which is served to them in an unattractive and hasty manner. The dining rooms have a rather bleak and institutionalized aspect."

YTS: From jubilation to rescue

For better or for worse, the Youth Training Scheme has settled down into its first year of operation. After 18 months of hype and hassle, of missionary fervour and furtive compromise, the actuality of the programme which is setting out to break the mould of industrial recruitment and training can now be seen.

The YTS was officially launched in September, although some schemes started well beforehand. Jubilant ministers and Manpower Services Commission officials were able to forget their earlier panic over the slow build-up, and announce jubilantly that they had secured more than enough places.

In addition to the 300,000 places for the predicted number of unemployed school leavers, there were another 160,000-plus ready to provide, in theory, a similar programme of integrated work and training for youngsters starting paid employment.

When the school holidays well past, employers and colleges found themselves waiting in vain for the flood of eager trainees they had been urged to ready themselves for. The MSC confidently counselled them to be patient. The rush to have the scheme operating on the full scale at the start of the new school year did not mean that it would

immediately function on the full scale, officials explained. And they started talking for the first time about their internal forecasts of the way the trainee numbers were expected to build up to the target by Christmas.

Since then, like military spokesmen breaking the news that their tactical regrouping is a major retreat, the officials have come to acknowledge that the YTS this year has failed almost entirely to bring in the youngsters who have started paid employment. The total number of trainees in the scheme this month is nudging 300,000.

The significance of this shortfall goes a long way beyond the disappointment that the scheme is getting only two-thirds of its target. It destroys the heart of the YTS concept - the provision of a planned foundation year for all minimum age leavers.

The YTS for the first year will be largely a programme for unemployed leavers, much the same scheme that the Government originally suggested, and was persuaded to extend, by a determined alliance of industry and education interests, into a radical plan to transform the transition from school to work.

A determination to go all-out next

Local authorities line up for more TVEI cash

Two out of three of the local authorities in England and Wales have joined the new queue for government money to fund the reintroduction of technical and vocational courses in their schools. And the chances are that most of them will get it.

Sixty-eight I.E.A.s have submitted projects for the extension of the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative next year. But within the last few days the first batch of schemes which are now under way, they are not competing for a limited number of grants.

The Manpower Services Commission says it will consider spreading the extra £20m a year that the Government is providing over all the projects which meet the criteria, although it has indicated that an appropriate cost per project might be around £400,000 to £500,000.

The number of authorities bidding is almost exactly the same as last time, but since 14 of those are now already being funded and two others have dropped out, it seems that around 15 are putting in proposals for the first time.

The two that have dropped out are Liverpool and Newham. Britain's biggest authority, the Inner London

Education Authority, has once again stayed out, as have Manchester, Avon, and Sheffield.

The authorities making bids are: Outer London boroughs: Barnet, Bexley, Bromley, Croydon, Ealing, Haringey, Harrow, Havering, Kingston-upon-Thames, Merton, Redbridge, Richmond-upon-Thames, Waltham Forest.

Dudley, Solihull, Walsall, Wolverhampton, Bolton, Bury, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Tameside, Doncaster, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds, Gateshead, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, North Tyneside, South Tyneside, Sunderland.

English counties: Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire, Cheshire, Cleveland, Cornwall, Cumbria, Derbyshire, Dorset, Durham, East Sussex, Essex, Gloucestershire, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Kent, Lincolnshire, Norfolk, North Yorkshire, Northamptonshire, Northumbria, Oxfordshire, Salop, Somerset, Suffolk, Surrey, Warwickshire, West Sussex, Wiltshire.

Welsh counties: Dyfed, Gwent, Gwynedd, Mid-Glamorgan, Powys, West Glamorgan.

CDD. (How to poach the UCCA way.)

Polytechnics, which are gaining popularity in some subjects, are also trying to bend the rules. One girl with a potential of CCD and who is wholly committed to a polytechnic course, applied to two of the most popular ones in September, subsequently receiving rejections without an interview, early in October. The reason was that she obtained only a Grade C in maths at O level and the courses for which she applied, so the admission tutors claimed, had a high maths content, and they looked for at least a Grade B pass (no mention in the prospectuses).

Pressed further, however, they said that they would have offered her a place if she could have shown some evidence of a varied work experience, although how this could have helped with the maths element of the course they were not prepared to say.

The question of equal opportunities frequently occurs. In a recent publication it was interesting to note the variations in the percentages of qualified women in various professions. At the top of the list came chiropodists (55 per cent), followed by headteachers (39 per cent), ophthalmic opticians (22 per cent), advertising account executives (20 per cent), and paediatricians (17 per cent).

These and other details can be found in *Equal Opportunities: A Careers Guide for Women and Men* by Ruth Miller and Angus Alison, (Penguin).

Careers Diary



by Brian Heap

Although the UCCA applications season has now officially ended - the final date being December 15 - "unofficially" universities will still accept applications up to March, but only "at their discretion". This is a "hidden rule", not widely publicized, which allows universities to offer places to candidates with high ability ratings.

It is well known that if a university can make a high offer, then many outsiders will be convinced that the course is not only popular but also has a "good reputation". (Advisers however should beware of making such assumptions. One university in the south of England gets round this problem by making offers of BBC for biological sciences and then by following the offer with a personal letter to the candidate making a second offer of

pupils that it was a safety net if they could not find work. The MSC did in the end send out a briefing pack to schools, but it arrived well after most pupils had made up their minds about the prospects ahead of them.

In the circumstances, it is not particularly surprising that most leavers have only gone into the YTS if they could not find jobs outside it.

That cannot be the whole explanation - clearly many, perhaps most employers, have not taken very seriously the idea that they should bring all the leavers they take on as employees into the YTS, since if they had, there would have been few jobs outside it.

This month's meeting of the Youth Training Board was told that research had shown that this summer people were still confusing the YTS with the Youth Opportunities Programme it replaced, and did not understand that it was meant to include employed youngsters. This attitude is reflected in the views of some in the education service and the careers service, who see the YTS as very much a second-best to "real jobs".

(This view appeared at one point to be shared by the commission's chairman, Mr David Young who, when it first became obvious that many more youngsters were going into jobs than last year, and not into the YTS, said that he was pleased for them: since then he has got round to the view that the best thing is that they should go into jobs which provide YTS.)

The Youth Training Board has approved a new marketing strategy which will go into operation from

February. Its objectives will be:

- To make young people "and their advisers" better aware of the YTS;
- To promote specific knowledge of the nature and quality of YTS opportunities;
- To encourage employers and others to see YTS as a scheme for employed young people as well as those without jobs;
- To locate the YTS within the broader New Training Initiative objectives (which are aimed at modernizing and extending the whole training system) and in particular to relate it to developing adult training strategy.

The officials say they need to get across the message that the YTS is a permanent bridge from school to work, not only to young people and their parents, but also to teachers and the careers service, as well as employers. They say that promotional material should be available to the schools this month.

Meanwhile ministers have agreed to make a minor ideological retreat to help the MSC get the YTS back on to its proper road. The Employment Secretary announced last week that the Youth Worker Scheme will no longer apply to 16-year-olds.

The scheme - a product of Tory beliefs that a major cause of youth unemployment is that young people are pricing themselves out of the labour market - offers a subsidy to firms that take them on at below a low maximum wage fixed by the Government.



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SPAIN

Iain Fraser Grigor on the post-Franco Basque revival

Post-Franco autonomy has been good to the Basques, and their political leaders have been quick to grasp its advantages – not least in the promotion of the language they perceive as central to their national identity.

During the long years of fascism the language was bitterly oppressed. In the Vitoria headquarters of the recently-established autonomous government the story is told of the school-child whose tongue was impaled on the compass of a non-Basque maths teacher for having dared utter a sentence in Basque; while in many schools any child caught speaking Basque was compelled to wear a special ring as a form of deterrence.

Popular response to Madrid's language policy was not of course unidimensional, and some hundreds of nationalist prisoners in the dictator's gaols used their time there to learn Basque – but the long-term effects were debilitating.

By the early 1970s, the proportion of speakers may have fallen towards 20 per cent, while those who were literate in the language composed only a small fraction of this figure.

But with the death of Franco in 1975, agitation flared in the Basque provinces (14 general strikes and 40 nationalist deaths in three years), and in 1980 a parliament was elected to represent the 2.1 million Basques of the autonomous region (there are another half-million in Navarre and 200,000 in the French "northern provinces").

In the field of education for the language, the new administration has moved with remarkable speed and decisiveness. During the last decade of Franco, certainly, perhaps as many as

The forbidden tongue learns to speak freely again



Emerging from the shadows: The Basque language ("Long live the Basques") is coming back into its own.

15 per cent of the school population had attended the semi-secret and privately-financed "Ikastola" schools, where the medium of teaching was primarily Basque, though demand from non-Basque speakers eventually drove them towards a bilingual mode of instruction.

To capitalize on this base, the autonomous government quickly allocated half of its entire budget (of 67 million pesetas (£285,000)) on education and culture, and last July introduced the degree of bilingualism which renders Basque obligatory in all schools (though higher education, still within the control of Madrid, is for the moment exempt).

According to Señor Xiza Gardner of

the autonomous government's education department, "Children can in principle avoid compulsory Basque, but under difficult conditions – they must be able to prove that they don't reside here permanently, for instance, or they substantially commenced their education beyond the frontiers of the Basque country."

"Otherwise, children must now attend an all-Basque school, with Spanish as a foreign language; an all-Spanish school with seven hours of compulsory Basque a week; or one of the model D schools (there is no letter C in the alphabet) where instruction is bilingual. It will take another couple of years to get the system running smoothly, but the trend is upwards all

the time."

Both for the current and the next school session, the bulk of the education budget will go on the production of Basque-language books (at a rate of 100 new titles a year) and in what Señor Gardner calls "the critical area of teacher training".

At the moment the teacher training colleges are geared to producing 2,000 mainly Spanish-speaking teachers a year, whereas the education department only needs 400 mainly-Basque speaking teachers a year. Hence, the seven colleges are being strongly urged to switch their output to Spanish-fluent to Basque-fluent teachers – to which is added the persuasive effect of falling rolls and high unemployment in

the Basque economy. And for established teachers, there is an extensive (and expensive) in-service programme involving a high proportion (some 4,000) of the nation's teaching force in a day-release and evening-class Basque fluency course, while at a higher level some hundreds of specialists are removed from their schools on full pay for up to 10 months and given intensive five-hours-a-day instruction in the language, leading to a diploma in Basque-language teaching proficiency.

Given the newness of these provisions, there is some uncertainty as to the extent to which they are being applied, and Señor Gardner admits that they do have a problem in some areas with the standard of Basque being taught and being learned, and still lack a sufficiency of teachers equipped with his department's proficiency diploma.

But he is confident that the programme has been a success to date; and according to Robert Pastor, editor in Vitoria of the bilingual daily *Deia*, the educational changes have had an immense effect on encouraging the language.

"There is no doubt at all about this," he says. "Things can only improve too – because all our children now learn the language at school, it is clear that in 10 or 15 years the number of people who can read and write the language will be very high."

This month, according to Señor Pastor, the Basque television service Euskal Telebista, established last January, is increasing its output to 40 hours a week.

And when a local novelist recently won one of the government's prizes for Basque writing, says Señor Pastor, "He said at the award ceremony that the books had been published in Basque in the last four years than in the last five centuries. This gives you some idea of the progress we have made since autonomy – and I think it's true to say we have only begun."

Hasty answers still need quick action

BELGIUM

Anne Goodyear gives details of a major education reform

The Belgian Government is congratulating itself on the fact that, after 25 years of stalemate, the new right-wing coalition has achieved in a matter of months what amounts to a major reform of the education system.

The new Compulsory Education Act, passed, some would say with unseemly haste and little consultation, by the Belgian government in July last year, extends the school-leaving age from 14 to 18. By 1988, Belgium will have the highest school leaving age in Europe. Whether it will also have achieved the major reforms in vocational orientation envisaged within the Act remains to be seen.

Planned reforms include the establishment of more effective training workshops within schools, the incorporation of existing apprenticeships into the education system and, more fundamentally, the establishment of a sandwich course option for 16 to 18-year-olds within industry.

The timing of the Act means that the government has only nine months to implement the promised changes, or it will risk the charge that the new law is merely a cosmetic cover for embarrassing unemployment figures. In August 1983, approximately one-third of young people under 25 (158,692) were unemployed.

Even considering the gradual raising of the school-leaving age – which will eventually affect 43,000 pupils who would otherwise leave before 18 – the reforms worry parents and youth workers, particularly those speaking areas where opposition has been strongest. They fear that, like the promised overhaul of the vocational schools more than 10 years ago, the reforms will be patchy, perhaps ill-thought out, and may lead to greater problems of discipline and truancy.

Plans to integrate the new and possibly unwilling pupils into the education system are inevitably at an early stage; indeed even the budgets are remarkably vague. The Francophone sector (with 44 per cent of the population) estimates the cost of the reforms for the final school term of 1983 at 200m Belgian francs (£2.5m), and certainly more in 1984. But, according to the Flemish, who refuse even to give an estimate, costs will in fact remain stable because of falling rolls.

The budget will have to cover not only the much vaunted sandwich course (known as *formation en alternance*). There is also likely to be an

expansion or restructuring of the vocational schools which already take those pupils unable to follow general or technical school. Day-release courses, currently compulsory for young people on apprenticeships, but administered by the Belgian equivalent of the Department of Trade, are to be recognized as fulfilling the obligation for part-time education after 16.

Particularly while the sandwich courses are being set up, it is likely that most of the young people who would have otherwise been unemployed will find their way into the vocational schools which provide training in a range of skills, like hairdressing, catering, carpentry, basic mechanics, window dressing and so on.

The standards of these schools tend to be variable, although in the Flemish areas substantial reform of teaching methods has been rewarded with some success. For example, the Coloma Institute in Mechelen, near Brussels, one of the largest vocational training schools in the country, boasts low discipline problems and an 85 per cent employment record among its students. The school attempts to do away with the formal discipline of traditional schools and the emphasis is on practical learning first, theory later.

Where the reforms are incomplete, however, adaptations to cope with a new influx of older pupils are likely to be problematic and possibly expensive. This is particularly true in the Francophone sector, where there is also a strong feeling of unease at the prospect of education becoming little more than a production line turning out pegs for industry's holes.

The influential parents' organization *Fédération Nationale des Associations de Parents de l'Enseignement* (*FNAP*), not unopposed in principle, but, as its spokesperson, Madame Therese Locoge, explained: "We do ask for a guarantee that the extra years will mean something. Our fear is that the young people concerned by the extension of the school leaving age will be those, let's say, who are the most difficult."

"They have suffered many failures, sometimes social problems, and we are afraid that if things are imposed upon them they will be really difficult."

A delay of one year to plan out the content of the final year's schooling would help to make the changeover less painful and the end product more worthwhile, she feels.

The Francophone Catholic Youth Council, the only organization to oppose the new law in principle, worries also about the financial and legal status of the trainees, particularly on sandwich courses within in-

family allowances as long as the child remains in full-time education, plans for ensuring an additional income for those on sandwich courses are still unformulated.

Mr Yves de Graaf, secretary general of the Institut Central des Cadres, and a member of the council said: "There is always talk of the need to integrate these young people into society. But if it is to work, integration must be on all levels – social, cultural and economic. They must have some sort of remuneration, the chance to handle their own budget."

But according to the Belgian Employers' Federation (*Fédération des Entreprises de Belgique*), if training is to be training and not just cheap labour, any payment must come from the state.

FEB is an enthusiastic supporter of the raising of the school leaving age, for which it has been lobbying for more than four years. Nevertheless, considering that many of the professional schools are notably failing to equip pupils for the workplace, the federation is anxious that the reforms should mean something other than simply "more of the same."

Mr Frans Tiebout, assistant adviser in FEB's Training and Employment department, said: "For this reason, although we are in favour of the reforms we have some problems with the timing. You can't say that you will start sandwich courses next year, if you have not prepared industry."

The models for the *formation en alternance* are likely to be established on a local level, and could include training in one company, a group of companies, or the establishment of factory workshops within schools.

Nevertheless, certain decisions will question of payment to trainees or the guarantee of jobs after training.

"I think the most important things will be to get the contracts clear between business and schools on a local level, and to define the position of young people on *alternance*," Mr Tiebout said.

"It is possible that what we learn in the *alternance* training could be used also in general and technical training to see how companies could be involved in the education system."

"But the problem at the moment is that with less than a year to go we do not know whether we will be required to pay these young people, how many people we will be taking or exactly what sort of training we will be required to give them. We think it is very important that these reforms in the law are carried out properly, but if the burden on the companies is too great, they will not work."



Island connexion: 97 per cent of young people are now able to attend school for 10 years without having to leave home.

Nordic expansion

DENMARK

Christopher Follett reports on how the Faroe Islands are meeting their education needs

For a straggling island fishing community like the Faroe Islands, schooling can present a big problem. Recent years have, however, seen a remarkable expansion in school building in the isolated 18-island North Atlantic archipelago, reducing the need for boarding schools and special accommodation for children, and decentralizing education from the capital, Torshavn, on the main island of Streymoy, and the other important town, Klaksvik, on the northern island of Borloy.

Thirty years ago, virtually only these two centres were capable of offering pupils education beyond the primary and lower secondary school or *folkeskole* level. Today there are 71 *folkeskoler* in the Faroes, of which an impressive 18 offer two and three year supplementary continuation courses beyond the obligatory primary schools.

The Faroese education department estimates that 97 per cent of young people are now able to attend *folkeskole* for the maximum 10 years without having to leave home (98 per cent of all Faroese schoolchildren continue in the optional extra eighth to tenth grades). Similarly, 80 per cent of young Faroese can attend *gymnasium* from home now, the situation being helped immensely by the completion last year of a new upper secondary school on the eastern island of Eysturoy.

Schools in the Faroe Islands vary vastly in size – the largest catering for 650 pupils, while in some remote *bygd* or settlement, schools exist with only one pupil. The education system on the islands is predominantly state-run, there existing only two private schools and one independent folk high school. There are 8,700 school pupils in the

islands at present (total population 44,000) and the education sector employs some 470 teachers. The Faroese education system is closely modelled on that of Denmark, which granted the islands home rule under the Danish crown in 1948.

Educational loans large in the Faroese budget, accounting for 395 million Danish crowns (£21m) this year, of which the Danish state contributed 44 per cent, the local government in Torshavn 35 per cent, the residue coming from local authorities.

Since 1948, a process of continuous devolution has steadily taken place with the Faroe Islands finally assuming control of education from the mother country in 1979, when a five-member Faroese educational council and a local education department was set up in Torshavn.

Commercial and technical college education has been increasingly decentralized too, and evening school education considerably extended. Some 100 attend the islands' sole teacher training college in Torshavn, while the Faroese Academy, also located in the little capital, provides two-year university courses up to the equivalent of "the academy," *hastskúlin*, notably specializes in Nordic studies, notably Faroese language and literature – the Faroese language is closely related to Icelandic and Old Norse, reflecting the islands' location halfway between Norway and Iceland.

One important effect of the decentralization, diversification and improvement of the Faroese educational system in the 1960s and 1970s has been to scotch the brain-drain drain from the archipelago – the Faroese population is growing and the islands enjoy a high standard of living.

Micred while Greenland, which achieved home rule under Denmark in 1979, is to open its first university in January. The Inuit (Eskimo) Institute, as it is to be called, will be situated in Godthaab, the capital. It is to have 14 students initially, the accent being on Greenlandic and Eskimo language, history, culture and civilization.

Where the taxman trails the tutor

SOVIET UNION

Jennifer Louie describes a flourishing, but clandestine, private enterprise

Secondary education is compulsory in the Soviet Union. Eight years spent at school may be followed by a two-year technical course, with school subjects at evening classes, for those in a hurry to leave, or for those the full school programme used to have difficulty in persuading children to stay on, but now that the number of pupils who can move up into classes 9 and 10 is limited, there seems to be growing interest in staying on until 17 or 18, usually with a view to taking a degree course later.

Enrolment for university level studies depends upon competitive entrance exams. With compulsory secondary education, free tuition and a single salary for these pupils each studying one hour daily, six days a week, or slightly more than the average

falls somewhat short of theory. For several years now a special form of private enterprise has been flourishing and, despite all official attempts to curtail it, it has become a prime factor in the formation of the student body. It is known as *repetitorstvo* (meaning repetition) and the name is very apt.

A university teaching staff member, usually holding a PhD, will make it known that he or she is willing to accept final year schoolchildren who are preparing for college entrance in a particular subject.

As a rule the tutor knows exactly the specific requirements of a given college, and in fact is usually a faculty member. Far from enlarging an aspirant student's knowledge, the private tutor relies on endless repetition and memorizing, geared to clearing the hurdle of the competitive entrance exam ahead – but not without a price.

Fees range from 5-10 roubles (about £5-10) per 45 minutes per pupil. A tutor of any standing will have at least two groups of these pupils each studying one hour daily, six days a week, or slightly more than the average

monthly Soviet wage. Working upon such a base it is an easy step to tax-evasion and the development of what might be described as assembly line cramming courses. The Soviet republic of Georgia, south of the Caucasus mountains, is known for its enterprising spirit, and so it was hardly surprising to read in *Evening Tbilisi*, published in the Georgian capital, of some examples of this very practice.

There was an instance of a private tutor "physically insulting" the taxman who came to his door to investigate irregularities. The severity of the insult is not recorded, but the phrase covers everything up to and including assault and battery, and it was not kept quiet. After the tax inspectors' campaign, the 42 private tutors who were registered in Tbilisi last year were joined by a further 64, but these registered only "unwillingly".

Private tutors in Georgia are known to work with groups of as many as 50 pupils. The difficulty of keeping their activities quiet led to some using a car as a mobile classroom, or taking their pupils out into the woods for lessons. The tax evasion, negligence, regard-

ing the teachers' official work, the creation of unequal opportunity at the entrance exam time (since it is only well-to-do parents that can afford such cramming) and the loss to the community of the brighter brains who are outpaced by the well-trained pupils, add up to "a bouquet of malodorous flowers" in the opinion of the authorities here.

Mr G Makatsaria, Deputy minister of higher and secondary vocational education in Georgia, blames the schools for the appearance of private cramming on such a scale. "do not always furnish the knowledge required for college enrolment."

But the problem goes deeper. Unilateral level education in the Soviet Union is a highly coveted goal with both moral and material incentives. Demand outstrips supply, and, as usual anywhere in the world, enterprising individuals take advantage of the situation.

However much it might be acknowledged, openly discussed and publicly discouraged, it is hard to imagine how the practice could ever be brought fully under control.

Redressing the imbalance of classes

WEST GERMANY

University survey

The first study of performance at a comprehensive university – the prototype reform university of Essen (UEG) – has yielded some surprising results.

The study – carried out by Professor Josef Hipps, director of the Institute of educational science at Bonn University – observed students who started in 1974 and 1975 and was completed this year. Despite considerable differences in ability among the students, equal success was achieved by two different groups in the final exam.

Comprehensive universities (the first five were founded by the SPD/FDP government of North Rhine-Westphalia in 1972) aimed to increase the proportion of working class children at university by admitting those with entrance qualifications for polytechnics (*Polytechnische Schule*) as well as those with the *Abitur*, the traditional university entrance requirement acquired at *Gymnasien* (grammar schools).

The long and short integrated courses at UEG observed in this report – economic science, mechanical engineering, construction engineering,

maths, physics and chemistry – combined ambition, endurance, interest

Of course, political critics of the comprehensive university concept expected a drop in standards to result from broadening the entrance requirements. Professor Hipps's study is therefore a feather in the cap of the UEG; but cannot be said to apply automatically to all comprehensive universities.

By means of a test of academic ability (TAB) Professor Hipps established that the new students with *Abitur* (As) were a significant ten points ahead of those with other qualifications, (NAs). A repeat of this test after two and four years obtained the same results, although the average standard had risen slightly. In the intermediate exam, the As again did better than the NAs, only 39 per cent of whom passed first time.

Between the intermediate and final exams, however, the gap closed. Moreover, they took the same length of time to complete their courses, yet another surprise for the educational world.

Professor Hipps does not attribute their success to a lowering of standards, but comments: "Obviously, the members of this group (NAs) counter these 'deficits' (lower initial intellectual ability) ... with other academically relevant personal qualities such

as ambition, endurance, interest

Greater equality of opportunity was also achieved. Forty per cent of As and 56.2 per cent of NAs among the new students were from working class homes, and they gained better marks on the long course than those higher up the social ladder (but did worse on the short course).

The ideal of short courses remains unfulfilled. After two years basic study for everyone, the integrated course should fork into a short branch (one more year) and a long one (two more years). Only about 25 per cent of students (most of them NAs) took the short course, and the two years basic study expanded to nearly three and a half years, the short course taking a total of nearly six years and the long one just over six and a half years.

Even these sobering statistics cannot entirely cloud the social success of the UEG in terms of greater opportunities for working class children. And 85 per cent of long course graduates and 70 per cent of short course graduates, whose salaries taught up with those of the former after two years in work, said they would choose the UEG again a second time round.

Professor Hipps declared the results of his study had astonished him: "I was a sceptical observer before I began," he said, "now I've been positively amazed."

and foster ideals which put the interests of the country before all else."

Under the requirements listed in the circular, patriotic education will begin in the first grade of primary school with instruction about the national flag, insignia and anthem, and familiarization with China's territory and capital. Primary and middle schools are to institutionalize flag-raising ceremonies, and the national anthem is to be sung at all important school events.

Patriotic education is to be integrated with all subjects, and in order to strengthen their "confidence in China's socialist modernization", students will regularly learn about the Government's current policies and the "national achievements in construction".

Schools should also make full use of the patriotic theme during extracurricular activities such as class meetings, essay and speech contests and reading and singing activities, says the circular.

● Gansu – an arid, backward province in north-central China – is set to benefit from an intensive replanting drive, thanks to the efforts of 132 million young people.

Aged between 7 and 28 years and all from northern China, they collected more than 500 tons of grass and tree seeds for Gansu, in response to a call from the Communist Youth League (CYL) and the Ministries of Education, Forestry and Agriculture, and Animal Husbandry and Fisheries.

The campaign followed a visit to Gansu in July by Communist Party general secretary, Hu Yaobang, who called for efforts to increase vegetation to curb soil erosion and improve the ecological environment by planting grass and trees. Wang, Zhaoqing, secretary of CYL central committee, asked members of youth organizations, and students, each to contribute 50 grams of seeds for the next 10 years.

Third union threat

Phil Gunson reports on a new government take-over bid

For the third time in a year, the Honduran government is trying to take over a teacher union. This time the victim is the secondary school teachers' organization called COPEMH.

The government, using a minority movement within the union known as the Francisco Morales movement, tried hard to rig last month's union elections. Delegates were shipped into the conference venue, and threatened with losing their jobs unless they followed the government line.

That ploy failed, but the movement is now challenging the election results in the Supreme Court. In similar cases in the past, the court has always ruled in favour of the minority, pro-Government faction.

In 1982, in the first demonstration of what has now become a familiar technique, the government moved against COLPROSUMAH, the larger and more militant of the primary school teachers' associations.

This union had played a prominent part in a bitter strike, which the government had broken by selective dismissals, threats, and the physical ejection of teachers from the schools they were occupying.

Taking advantage of the union's annual delegate meeting, paid government agents, acting as delegates, questioned through the courts the legitimacy of its biggest delegation. Although the legal basis of the action was dubious, and the court's pro-government ruling unlawful, union leaders obeyed the order to suspend the offending branch.

Last month it became apparent that the government, encouraged by its earlier successes, was about to attempt, against COPEMH, a third coup.

But, as COLPROSUMAH has made clear, it is not enough to impose a pliable leadership in order to neutralize the teachers' unions. When the school year begins in February, the union's authentic leaders will be challenging the government directly, over the issues of pay and the legal status of the teaching profession.

Señor Ambrosio Sabio, the outgoing leader of the authentic COLPROSUMAH, is convinced that the pro-government unions will have to join the fight if they are to preserve any credibility.

Pledge on missing teachers

A delegation from the National Union of Teachers has secured a pledge from the Foreign Office that it will investigate the plight of 26 named teachers who have disappeared in El Salvador.

The delegation, led by Mr. Don Winter, the NUT president, met Baroness Young, Minister of State at the Foreign Office with special respon-

sibility for Central America. She heard that 315 teachers had been killed in El Salvador since 1981, 700 had disappeared and a further 4,000 had been forced into exile.

Baroness Young agreed to a request from the delegation urging her to condemn the right-wing government of El Salvador, which has used death squads to kill political opponents.



Secondary pupils face the growing prospect of private tuition for college entrance.

Flying the flag at top of the school

CHINA

Flag-raising ceremonies are to be established in Chinese schools as part of an official drive to strengthen patriotic education.

A recent Ministry of Education circular emphasizes the "great importance in conducting propaganda and education on patriotism" for children and young people, and urges schools to "guide students to link their own fate and future with that of the motherland."

LETTERS

Pious sanctions do not help

Sir - As someone walking the "tight-rope path", I cannot help wondering whether those who adopt such a militant anti-apartheid stance towards everything South African have given as much thought to people as they obviously have to policies and politics. They seem so very confident that the people to whom they offer such articulate, forceful support are all going to welcome this particular brand of support. If with this letter I do no more than motivate interested, sympathetic, but perhaps uninformed, readers to question the validity of this confidence, then it will have achieved its purpose.

Let me state my credentials: I have worked with, for, and under black Africans since 1960, and I am anti-apartheid. To some of those mentioned in your report of November 25, I am nevertheless a source of racist South Africa. I am always unhappy about labels, however, and to me, anti-apartheid in their sense could

easily imply anti-black, not in sentiment of course, but in effect. Hilary Wile's report not surprisingly stimulated considerable interest and discussion within my university, and I am not misrepresenting my black colleagues' reaction when I say that they were above all disturbed and saddened by what they see as misdirected and misconceived concern on their behalf. They are senior academics now who have, in some cases literally from the gutter, struggled against the system, and succeeded in spite of it. They have a commitment and dedication to change. They are both visionaries and practical men (and women), seeing the continuing improvement of their people as a priority factor in combating apartheid. For this they need stability. They look for support with substance, not sanction, and certainly not potential promptings to violence. They were quick to point out that sanctions, isolationist manoeuvres,

disinvestment, all inevitably harm the black man first. If there are those who sincerely advocate such measures, then presumably they also sincerely believe that two or three generations of black people must be sacrificed in the possible interests of more distant generations. Everything in the garden is not lovely, but ploughing it up or denying it fertiliser is surely not the best answer. Some black people, at least, now enjoy a quality of life (not to be measured in purely material terms), and a degree of influence unimaginable 20 years ago - and those are not the words of a white man, either. It is quite clear to me that such people deserve, and to be able to be fully influential should get, our unstinted support whenever they ask for it - and make no mistake, they do ask for it. Are they not more qualified to evaluate what is best for their own people than distant MPs and trade unionists?

British money was responsible for financing me in Libya, but I didn't support Gaddafi's Islamic revolution; in the Congo, but I didn't support Marxist Scientific Socialism. And I have colleagues in Russia; they do not, I believe, support the Kremlin. Some may wish to accuse us of naïveté or worse, but I am convinced that I and others like me can best express our concern for the people of South Africa by practical involvement. Pious withdrawal, however sincere in its intent, will not help those thousands of black pupils currently without qualified teachers to become matriculants; it will almost certainly help them to become militants, briefly affluent with their communist-furnished weaponry. B W TANNER
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Staffroom row

Sir - It is unfortunate when a highly respected publication of the quality of *The Times Educational Supplement* carries a front page news story so grossly inaccurate and misleading as that which appeared on December 9, 1983, relating to the staffroom usage dispute at West Derby CE Primary School, Liverpool.

The dispute is not over whether or not the caretaker can take a cuppa in the staffroom. It is over the principle of the teachers' staffroom being redesigned, without any consultation, as a joint staffroom, so that members of the teaching staff have no room available to them in this open plan school where they can work or discuss professional matters in private. The caretaker, through his union, is expecting to make use of the teachers' room for whatever part of his rest periods that he chooses, and these include three hours within the school day. If the Liverpool Authority wishes to make joint staffrooms available in all schools, that is a matter for them, but it should not be at the expense of teachers who can expect accommodation to be available solely to them for work and social purposes. This has been custom and practice over many years in most schools and it is a requirement supported by the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1981.

Your reporter's mathematical ability is a matter of considerable concern. An error in the measurement of the caretaker's rest room, where the total area is, in fact, five times greater than that stated, indicates a need for a little practical primary school experience which must have been denied in years past, but accurately the number of teachers suggests that a crash course in reception class learning might be useful.

The sentence "The NUT had offered a compromise whereby the caretaker could use the staffroom for certain periods of the day while alternative premises were damaged" promotes a false impression of the situation. The NUT had offered a compromise whereby the caretaker could use the staffroom for certain periods of the day while alternative premises were damaged. The NUT had offered a compromise whereby the caretaker could use the staffroom for certain periods of the day while alternative premises were damaged.

Provocative, inflammatory reporting will do nothing to solve this problem where a settlement is essential for the sake of the children attending the school.

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Richard Garner writes: The facts relating to the size of the room and the kernel of the dispute were supplied to us by the chairman of Liverpool's education committee, Mr Dominic Brady. The sentence complained of, indeed, contains an unfortunate printing error - the word "damaged" should have read "arranged".

Of course it can go wrong. Much theoretical knowledge, embodied in syllabuses in the hope of general application, really has a very doubtful utility, for example, the ability to write down the equation for the action of baking powder, demanded of non-chemist home economics students, is an example of a "dead" knowledge.

Nevertheless, it is important to be clear about the difference in approach so that we can steer a useful path between demands of groups like the MSC and what some would call basic general education.

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Change of mind?

Sir - With reference to Hugh David's comments about Theatre Centre's play *1983* in his article "No Socialism, no sympathy" (TES, December 16), permit me to quote from his original review of the play (TES, January 28, 1983):

"Although the company's own stance comes over clearly enough (like the clergyman asked for his views on sin, they are quite simply against sin, and all it stands for), the introduction of characters like Chuck allows opposing ideas to be fairly presented (our italics) in the 90-minute play... it was impossible to believe that they (the audience) were being 'got at' or politically manipulated. Their beliefs and opinions might have been challenged, but that surely is one of the primary functions of drama in education and elsewhere" (our italics).

very clearly and are well within the imagination how they could ever pass O and A level examinations. Does it necessitate glossy, expensive booklets to tell people that the killing and cutting up of an animal for mere curiosity is wrong? Is a mass of literature necessary in order to educate people that a disregard for animal life leads to a desensitized attitude for all life and how much material should we supply in order to show that it is possible to learn about the anatomy of animals through films, models and text books, just as it is possible through the same means to learn at school about the human anatomy.

Why does it mostly fall to individuals outside a profession to exert pressure for reform, and why is it that the professional will stand by their archaic and often cruel practices, defending them at every band and turn? This has been true throughout history. The aim of the BUAV is to show students that they do have a choice, that there is an alternative viewpoint. We encourage them to discuss the issue with their biology teachers. Happily there are many biology teachers who support our aim to end dissection in schools and there are others who are beginning to listen. MARGARET MANZONI
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Both articles imply that categorising is an impossibility in the teaching of English. Yet there seems to be a growing pressure to describe our contribution in terms of knowledge, skills, and areas of experience.

Is it not counter productive to the central aim of English teaching to attempt this? Are we not open to the charge of deception? We can use these external labels: what we cannot do is quantify our full contribution; the consequence of their learning is the concern of the developing child.

We find this attempted compartmentalising of experience creates barriers. Whereas we believe our function may think, grow and shift their ground.

We are, therefore, making a call for support for the notion that the English experience is the foundation of the curriculum not a "part". Why require us to describe our function in terms not our own? Our function is clear: we would like to be allowed our space for each child and each child's growth is a mystery. Do we want to respond to a "mystery" with a "muddle"?

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play had "become something very different"? On what grounds does he now maintain that it was being used by the GLC "to make an overtly political point"?

Hugh David is surely distorting the evidence of his own experience for the sake of sensationalism. DAVID JOHNSTONE
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Hugh David writes: Reviewing 1983 last January, I took the view, poor innocent that I am, that no company would dare, let alone want, to play a piece of propaganda in schools. Writing for teachers, I looked for and stressed 1983's attempts at balance. Maybe I found more than the *Sun* and Mr Norman Tebbit (who did find the excellent, well-researched pack which dealt scrupulously fairly with all sides of the argument. Shorn of these on the London fringe, the play lost the greater part of its objectivity; it was not, in other words, a piece of propaganda. Mr Tebbit might quite reasonably find "decidedly harmful".

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When the distant drummer taps out new messages



Roland Leighton: lost love

Sir - Raymond O'Malley is moderator for an experimental O level English Literature paper in which unseen poems are set "partly to avoid rehearsed answers" (TES, November 25). The poem *Drummer Hodge* by Hardy (about a young Wessex conscript's death in the Boer War) is, for Mr O'Malley, a "very moving poem". The poem was set for O level last summer. Unhappily, the Falklands war intervened between the setting of the paper and its examining, and messed up the candidate's answers. They would keep on dragging in life (or rather death) when they should have been talking about literature. What a nuisance! It is easy to imagine the examiners' meeting at which the Falklands factor was fed into the computer to sort out the pass-rate (or rather fail-rate) for that year.

In 1982 I was teaching A level English, and two of our set (AEB) texts were Vera Brittain's *Testament of Youth*, and 1914-1918 War Poetry. Has Mr O'Malley ever tried to discuss *Dulce et Decorum Est* with students whose contemporaries are actually fighting a war in which the principle Sassoon so long ago bitterly attacked is once again invoked?

Teachers perpetuated "the old lie" in the First World War with their emphasis on the heroic qualities demonstrated in classical literature. Roland Leighton, Vera Brittain's lover, whose loss is at the centre of her autobiographical work, won all the major prizes at Uppingham for Greek and Latin translation; at his final speech his headmaster intoned "If a day may not be useful to his country, he is better dead". A year later Leighton was dead.

Good A level students naturally connected the issues raised by Vera Brittain with the War Poetry; and these

issues were made frighteningly real for them by the Falklands conflict. Yet the AEB examiners, like Mr O'Malley in the same spirit of irritation, lamented the fact in their report on that summer's examination: "regularly there arose the suspicion, reinforced by the number of references to the South Atlantic conflict, that candidates do not always respond to this selection (of war poetry) for literary reasons. Nevertheless there was a wealth of appropriate quotation, and adequate though not always penetrating evaluation of it."

Yes, a good literary response should, as Mr O'Malley says, be to the poem. But the poem is neither read nor written in a vacuum. That was precisely the point made by Arnold, who wrote that "the noble and profound application of ideas to life is the most essential part of poetic greatness". A literary appreciation which lacks that generous awareness will soon become arid.

The question on *Drummer Hodge* asked the candidate to say what the poem meant to them; it actually invited them to make the connexion between literature and life. Asked for unrehearsed answers, they gave them - and were penalized for it. Perhaps it might have occurred to the Cambridge Syndicate examiners that *Drummer Hodge* became a different poem between January and June that year; but it would be optimistic to expect such flexibility when their Chief Moderator sees a central duty of the English teacher as being to teach students "tacitful ways of convincing the examiner what he needs to know".

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Real solution

Sir - I found the article by Geoffrey Howson ("Motivating Maths", TES, November 4) interesting, for it raised a number of questions.

Why, I wonder, is it still necessary to argue the place for real problem-solving in the teaching of mathematics? It has long been recognized that the best way to learn to read is by reading books and the more relevant these are to the young child's experience the more likely the child is to want to read. Is it likely to be so very different for number concepts, might not the real world provide the path to mathematical understanding?

Second, why do we readily accept that the very young child is only capable of understanding mathematical concepts in relation to the real world, emphasizing the role of practice?

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al experience in the early stages of maths teaching, and yet have doubts about introducing the application of mathematics to the real world in real problem-solving, to older children? The argument is often that they are too young for this work!

The process of applying mathematical concepts to the real world is a natural one and something that every human being does automatically, virtually from birth, so why therefore do we as teachers not capitalize on this more readily, and make real problem-solving part of our math's syllabus? It is surely one way to achieve Mellin-Olsen's 5 rationale.

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FEATURES

NO PROBLEM

Susan Thomas looks at an attempt to get teachers and pupils to manage their own solutions

Professor Keith Jackson, creator and chief administrator of the Bulmershe-Comino Problem Solving Project is small and friendly which is just as well because his ideas, though showing abounding commonsense, could be profoundly threatening if they were not supported by so much warmth and encouragement.

For he believes that good teaching is good management: that children should be helped to identify and achieve their own goals using management systems and that this approach is applicable to every area of life.

During his time at Bulmershe College of HE, community workers, teachers, advisers and college administrators have all studied his approach and put it into practice. Now, in the fourth year of the project, he is able to spread himself a little, running seminars for interested groups.

I caught up with him at one in an Oxfordshire secondary school where he had been invited to speak by a group of the staff who want to improve their pupils' learning skills. It was their second session. Having discussed objective setting, self-knowledge, motivation and the need to give pupils a more active role in study, they had undertaken to ask their classes about their learning problems.

If this seems a very obvious way to start, it isn't. "You will find," said Keith Jackson, "that it is something the teachers have never done before. They will be very surprised by what they hear." He was right. The results were both surprising and disturbing.

Once they got started, I couldn't stop them. They were enthusiastic with subjects they didn't like just because they'd signed on to come back into the sixth."

The staff were unaware of the children's anxieties too. They had not expected to find children who felt guilty simply because they had problems. . . . they thought they were letting themselves and their teachers down because they had difficulties. . . . They felt they should be able to be more positive about studying because all the rotten ones left last year."

There were, too, external pressures like the sheer physical difficulty of private study in a noisy form room and, more alarming, the fact that numbers of the older children "felt they'd never pass their retakes because they had already been told, quite specifically, by other members of staff that they would fail."

As well as listening to their pupils, the staff had listened to themselves. "I realised what a bloody awful teacher I was . . . how boring . . . not teaching to achieve a particular result - and not getting one."

"I became aware of myself teaching - how much time I spend talking, how confusing the standard book is for someone who doesn't already know the work."

It is not hard to see why the professor needs to be encouraging. The group had reached stage two of the problem solving. The first involves deciding what result you hope to achieve. The second, identifying the problems which may prevent you from doing this, involves a certain amount of self-knowledge.

By way of encouragement and to show that the system is universally applicable, he told them about a group of gifted children, problem solving on an outdoor adventure course.

He said that last summer he and Ron Lewin, Berkshire advisor for science and technology, had run a course at Atlantic College, teaching the basics of problem solving - setting objectives, identifying and analysing the obstacles in their way, finding ways of dealing with them and monitoring both their progress and the quality of the result at the end of the exercise. They were then asked to apply to the course.

"The children were less than enthusiastic. But they came back after a day's rock climbing very pleased with themselves."

First, they had decided, everyone needed self-knowledge - there is little point in setting

clearly unobtainable goals. So that if you are timid, overweight and unathletic, the top of the cliff may not be a reasonable objective; a point half way up may be more reasonable.

Then, said the climbers, "It is a question of discovering the spirit in which you are supposed to achieve the ascent; heroically with blood; gracefully; cheerfully with a twinkle in your eye; or co-operatively, with team spirit". In this way, both goal and problems became apparent.

The teachers had shown commendable self-knowledge, I felt. Their session began heroically with the revelations of their pupils' problems and progressed cooperatively towards devising techniques which would help the children to take notes more efficiently, receive and impart information, and be more creative.

"Plenty of the kids in my classes can be creative, they just don't want to be. We have to find ways of making creativity desirable" said a history teacher. "And" added a biologist "of making curiosity respectable."

Creativity, they decided, was the link between ingenuity and resourcefulness. Somewhere along the line from infant to upper secondary school, children lose their curiosity, resourcefulness and ingenuity. Or else they learn that it is not academically respectable. How then to give it back?

That was to be the focus for another meeting. After two sessions with Keith Jackson, the group was so impressed by his approach to learning problems and life skills that they decided to form



Professor Keith Jackson



Techniques that can be applied in all walks of life

a regular, weekly, problem-solving study group and asked him to come again.

This sort of response is common when teachers choose to examine their role in school, he says. Those who are preoccupied into doing so are less enthusiastic and less likely to last the course or practice the technique.

At present around 20 per cent of teachers are prepared to apply a logical system to their work. In time, and as the concept gains ground, he is confident that the percentage will increase. Others may be encouraged to hear that a high proportion of those who do, subsequently get promotion.

On the whole, primary schools, still more

child-orientated and less bound by subject timetable and exams, are more enthusiastic than the secondaries, says Keith Jackson.

He has spent much of his time at Bulmershe teaching problem solving technique to teachers and administrators in Berkshire and Hampshire. This has been extended to cover the whole country and involves infant, junior, secondary and further education teachers, students of education, the administrative section of Bulmershe College, community workers and advisors with a special interest in the gifted.

The results were encouraging. Teachers reported that their pupils gained self-confidence and motivation while they were able to achieve the

children blossomed; classroom friction declined; and hitherto-unrecognized talents emerged from the most unexpected quarters. Adults have been heard to say that their whole life had been changed by applying problem solving techniques to everything from coping with 4X to reconciling school, work and the demands of elderly parents.

"The possibilities for developing social and linguistic skills are enormous", reports the Basingstoke Infant Group while Dr Harold Silver, principal of Bulmershe College, found that " . . . after several sessions with Keith Jackson I found myself thinking systematically in daily life and when crises occur I get to the heart of the problem very quickly".

This year the Comino Foundation extended the funding to allow the project to develop its work and disseminate the findings. An increasing number of groups - maths coordinators, FE teachers, probation officers, home help organisers and teachers of all ages and disciplines - have taken it up.

Perhaps the most exciting development is the opportunity to make it available to a majority of youngsters through the Youth Training Scheme core-curriculum, as suggested by the Mansell report.

If Keith Jackson is right, and he seems to have plenty of support, problems solving skills are an essential requirement for life. In theory, teachers should be good at both problem solving and getting results - in practice they often aren't.

Teacher education is to blame, he says. At college, student teachers are taught to set out aims and objectives and lesson plans. Once in the classroom these go by the board because they have not been shown to work. "How often" he asks "do you hear teachers say 'what shall we give them to keep them occupied on Wednesday afternoon?' - and how seldom 'what shall we do to achieve this result on Wednesday afternoon?'."

Teachers assume that traditional methods are enough. When they see that these aren't achieving the right results, they don't correct their teaching patterns. In other words" he says, "they are not extending managerial control over the learning system."

For all but the most woolly minded optimists, I would recommend *The Art of Problem Solving* available from Bulmershe College, £3.40. There is also a correspondence course, devised to answer the problem of releasing teachers from the classroom. All enquiries to: Bulmershe-Comino Problem Solving Project, Bulmershe College of Higher Education, Woodlands Avenue, Earley, Reading, Berks.

FEATURES

MIND YOUR LANGUAGE

Jack Cross visits a school determined to make relevant French lessons part of the core curriculum of every pupil
Photographs by Martin Mayer

Bill Spicer's third-year French lesson seems orthodox enough. The blackboard bears the heading "Le Vol", with little pictures, appropriately labelled, of a gun, mask, a bank doorway, and the past participles of several verbs. Boys and girls in turn make their contributions to a little story about a robbery - "J'ai mis un masque", "J'ai pris de l'argent", "J'ai quitté la banque", and so on. Some have their sentences off pat; others find the exercise more difficult. When, however, Simon struggles to produce the phrase, "J'ai rempli le sac", it produces neither exasperation in the class nor the smallest hesitation in the proceedings. On the face of it, it appears simply to be an example of efficient teaching technique, using lots of reinforcement, with a smallish group (23) of attentive and well-motivated pupils.

It is, in fact, a little more than that. For one thing, it is a totally mixed-ability class of youngsters who have been studying French since they entered Sheredes school and who expect to go on doing so to the end of the fifth year. In other comprehensives Simon might have been doing remedial English and most of the less able children offered only some kind of non-linguistic judge like "European money".

As an APU occasional paper on Foreign Language Provision reveals, whether a child actually learns a language or not depends often on which stream or set he or she is placed in. Many spend their time studying (in English) life abroad, and sometimes a kind of linguistic survival course for tourists. In a significant number of schools, . . . background studies which contained no language content were sometimes introduced to lower ability pupils in their first or second years, a procedure apparently sanctioned by an HMI report which accepted that languages just don't suit all children.

At Sheredes they will have none of that. Formed 14 years ago, it remains committed to the notion of a common curriculum as promulgated by its first head, Maurice Holt. They try to put into practice the Hirst and Peters formula about the "forms of knowledge" which are the requirement and right of any educated person. Knowing how the people of another nation think and speak, they believe, comes into this category, so French is a core subject, though 1983-84 will be the first year in which it will be followed through by everyone to examination level.

As teachers will be quick to point out, it takes more than an idealistic philosophy and the will to make a curriculum work. The school has to be organized in a way that fits its chosen objectives. Sheredes has seven semi-autonomous faculties, whose heads organize the work in consultation with their colleagues within the parameters of a timetable agreed with the deputy head. A day blocked into four 70-minute periods gives ample opportunity for variety within a lesson and a lot of flexibility in deploying faculty staff.

The objections to mixed ability teaching in any subject are well-known. It doesn't, it is said, "stretch" the potential high-flyers; nor does it allow enough time to be given to look after the least able children. It requires a Superteacher to cope with its demands. For such reasons, with systems increasingly being rejected, with science and language teachers leading the retreat. Neither Bill Spicer nor his faculty colleagues lay claim to Superman status but they do believe they have developed a team-based organization and teaching methodologies which answer most of the objections.

They have certainly cultivated a coherent in-house style. Clive Hoare, taking a first-year class which had been studying the subject for less than eight weeks, also used pictures, of a mouse, a cat, a piece of cheese, a table and Papa watching television. They too deployed a limited vocabulary (in the Present Tense) to make up a simple

little story - "Le chat regarde la souris . . . la souris mange le fromage . . . etc." He, too, re-rehearsed the material in a variety of ways, including question and answer - "Que fait la souris? . . . et puis?"

What was significant about both lessons was their implicit open-endedness. All the pupils would continue by writing something like 20 sentences in their books, some of them for homework, but they would not be all the same. Some would be content to recapitulate the lesson as taught but others took it for granted that they were expected to develop the tale in their own way. One third-year boy had already written, "J'ai regardé l'argent et j'ai souri", others were asking how to say "Madame sat up in bed and shrieked" and what was the French for "I was thrown into jail". A little conspiracy was developing among first-year pupils to produce an ending in which the mouse, eating the cheese, got into a sandwich and was eaten by Papa. They'd had the same drills to produce precision and pace but were, according to their abilities and confidence, prepared to use them in individual ways.

Later, the material was to be developed into a story book, play or (in the case of the burglary) a objectives, which, in the words of the school's sophical deputy head, P Michalski-Upton, aim to make all the work "immediate, relevant, cultural, creative, applicable and expressive". He has an answer for the sceptics who ask what does the school do when it comes up against the cold reality of exams. "Our children take them in their stride; the school's record is better than the county and national averages in this regard. Our testing, in the mixed-ability situation, is more demanding, intensive and rigorous than the conventional annual exams, which we don't have."

Bill Spicer, though conceding that the present third year were to a certain extent guinea-pigs, was confident that French would prove no exception to the general rule. The blocked timetable and team system made it simple and natural for groups to be hived off occasionally for specific training to meet the demands of O level or CSE - such targets are chosen by parents, pupils and teachers talking together. Many children, including all the least able ones, would take part in the graded assessment scheme which Hertfordshire, like many counties, is developing, particularly in modern languages.

He has some doubts about GCE though. Like many other language teachers he is very critical not so much of the O level content as of its marking scheme. "Take the comprehension passage, which counts for so much. Candidates have to read a pretty stiff piece of foreign prose. There are a set of questions, also in the examined language, which they have to understand and answer to the questions - a couple of correct answers to the questions - a couple of incorrect verb endings or misplaced accents and they lose the lot. Even fluent speakers and readers miss out on this question." He hopes the new 16-plus exam will take a more liberal attitude; if not Sheredes may have to go for a Mode 3 O level. They're anxious at the school to make contact with others who are having to face the same problem.

At any rate, there's no way they will allow examination demands to stop them including French in a core curriculum designed to provide a genuine education for all pupils while creating opportunities for the more advanced ones to show their abilities.

Anyone interested in mixed ability language teaching can contact Bill Spicer at Sheredes School, Cock Lane, Hoddeston, Herts.



REVIEW

SHEER
VERVE

If *Paso doble*, by nineteen-year-old Israeli Aristidou, had been by one of Britain's best-known sculptors, it would undoubtedly have stood out for its sheer verve and accomplishment at the recent Hayward sculpture show. Erucis, however, is doing a level on the full-time arts and crafts course at Kingsway-Princeton College for Further Education, so the future of this exhilarating seven-foot piece is currently uncertain.

It began as a twelve-inch maquette inspired by the enigmatic theme, "Fascinating Rhythms", the biggest problem he apparently encountered

were how to fit the hardboard and pine sculpture together and how to make it stand up. The process took ten days and represents, says his lecturer Debbie Usher, "a remarkable degree of craftsmanship realized despite minimal facilities".

Next term the sculpture, which is in bright primary colours, may acquire a backdrop (already designed). Any institution - or dance studio! - which offered to exhibit it would be doing itself, quite as much as Erucis, a favour.

Michael Church



Guess the news

Peter Mullen suggests that the current BBC style of news-presentation may be having subtly destructive effects



Presenting "Sixty Minutes"



Bernard Falk and Hugh Scully

"Here is the News... that is the end of the News." Nowadays things are different and they are getting worse. In fact you might say that the BBC's new early-evening showpiece *Sixty Minutes* could be subtitled "Guess the News". First we have to strain to hear what is being said above the frenetic jangling of the signature tune. Why is it thought necessary to have words and music at the same time? Can't producers see that to have any other sounds competing with the words of news is to undervalue the importance of the news itself? We are in the land of gimmicks here: everything has to be what those in the trade call "good television" - in other words it must be downloaded with as many slick changes and whirling captions as it is possible to cram into a minute's introduction.

Sixty Minutes is losing in the ratings war. Perhaps that might induce the BBC to wonder whether we want to have stuck before us a presenter who offers four or five thin slices of news about half a dozen different parts of the world, from the Middle East to Middlesbrough, all in less than thirty seconds, and who then hands us over to Harriet or Moira to start the whole operation over again, and who finally - in case we should labour under the delusion that what we have been hearing is the news - announces "But first, here is the news".

Sixty Minutes has only brought to final putrescence a trend which has been long practised on Radio Four. The idea is to keep the listener's attention, to stop him switching-off or switching-over. This can only mean that the BBC has an exceedingly low opinion of its listeners' attention-span. They will tell you that it is only a matter of style, of being casual, informal and generally brightened-up. But the trouble is that the current mania for ever-briefer summaries repeated (two or three times inside five minutes and spiced by "regional comments" from innumerable "special reporters") produces only a chaos of words in which nothing is communicated. The mind, if it is even engaged in the first place, soon becomes saturated and the information is not assimilated; it simply drains away.

There are aspects and varieties of information that cannot be conveyed in one-minute summaries, short sharp shocks of news that are ended as soon as they are begun. But the real damage goes

much deeper, for, once people have got used to attending for only a few seconds at a time, they become unable to attend to anything longer. Thus the BBC's methods produce deprivation of understanding - a nice twist in Orwell's year for "communication" read "babel".

I have again and again asked pupils to mention one or two items "that were on the news this

morning". The result is usually an embarrassed silence or else a wild guess about some fallsafe such as Cruise Missiles or Northern Ireland. Of course they remember *Breakfast Time's* astrologer; but then he gets longer to speculate about tomorrow's news than your average television journalist's time to report on today's.

It is the pervasiveness of broadcasting which has created the universal mode of listening. The

consequences for all kinds of teaching are both obvious and startling: how can young people be expected to listen to anything for any reasonable length of time when the ubiquitous medium of broadcasting is conditioning them to expect everything as "instant"? It is all made that much worse because there is no possibility of opting out. As conservationists have discovered in other areas, there is only one environment: that is why what the BBC (and ITV) does is crucial.

The Controller of Radio Four has even more ambitious aims for his network. He is worried because "more people switch off Radio Four in mid-morning than any other network". Hardly surprising, you might think, given the regular exaltation of mindless trivia in *Start the Week* or *Midweek* (because people are paid to talk) and the frequently inaudible telephone conversations on *Tuesday Call*. The Controller wants to turn this at present sectionalized jabber into something which he calls "a rollercoaster". This means simply the blurring of distinctions between beginnings, middles and endings of programmes and the adoption instead of something like the continuous homogenous superficiality of Radios One and Two. Not exactly like them of course, because "the character of the network will be preserved". What character?

Reith's warning that to give people what it is imagined they want will soon result in their wanting what they are being given has come horribly true and the BBC is now responsible for a dissociation of sensibility on the grand scale. Events are juxtaposed without any thought of propriety, with no regard for what is incongruous, tasteless. I am no puritan but something has surely gone wrong when the hourly news summaries on Radios One and Two every day sound more like "Six people were killed in a house fire in Westchester - now here's Barry Manilow".

How can teachers hope to convey any sense of the wonder and subtlety of the world to pupils who are daily desensitized in this way? The BBC seeks to defend itself by talking about cheerfulness and informality but its news output is nothing of the kind - only coarse, indiscriminating, unsubtle, tactless and becoming more and more mindlessly the same.

The insidious trend to sameness is a sort of totalitarianism in the passive voice with all the dehumanizing which that implies. Well what do you expect in 1984?

ARTS

Outside looking in

A Childhood
C4, Mondays, January 2, 9, 16 and 23.
9.00-10.00pm.

In a way, the title of Angela Pope's documentaries is a deliberate misnomer: seven children are featured in the four films and the homes in which they are living out the experiences of their childhood are quite dissimilar. But while experiences may differ widely, the experience of childhood itself is much the same wherever it is taken. It is a time, as writers on the subject remind us, when the emotions are more acute and the feelings more vivid, when the world is fresh and our vision of it unclouded. It is also a time characterized by a pervasive sense of impotence.

As adults, we may see our hopes for the future invested in our children, but their own hopes are usually a good deal more immediate and express their lack of any real power to influence their surroundings. "Wish they'd get back together again", John says of his separated parents; and when his sister Rebecca wonders if their mother will eventually marry her boyfriend, he mutters the urgent incantation: "hope she don't, hope she don't". Shut your eyes and make a wish.

John and Rebecca live in Brixton, their father in Belfast. They enjoy a level of affluence below that which allows private telephones and the film centres on the children's efforts to set up a telephone call, via a Belfast neighbour, to a public coin box so that they can speak to their father. When, incredibly, the call comes through, they forget what they were meant to say. John weeps himself and the children dissolve into the uncontrollable giggles of those whose emotions are acute and whose vision of the world is unclouded.

Meanwhile, their mother is struggling to achieve the impossible: to keep a family of five children on social security, to give them the affection that



John and Rebecca

they need, to live a life of her own and to stop herself and the rest of them using bad language in front of the camera crew. For the moment, the children take her heroism for granted. If they had a television set that could get more than two channels, they might see this and reflect. That, I suppose, is the main justification for such fly-on-the-wall documentaries. Angela Pope spent several weeks with each family before starting to film and the aim was to capture the truth rather than the factual reality of their lives. No one opens a front door and exclaims: "Hello, John... My God, who's that bloke with the camera?" But when the man calls from the LEB to cut off the electricity and agrees to leave it for 24 hours, John's mother thanks him with the authentic humility of someone content to know that she can get by for another day and grateful for it. How much anyone actually chooses to be filmed getting a reprieve from the LEB, is another matter.

Not all children are so photogenic as these or could behave so unself-consciously in front of the camera. The films are presented without comment, but the director is there to set up the telling scene. Rebecca and John, for example, staring through the church window at the choir practice of their black neighbours and, not because they are Northern Irish living in Brixton, but because they are children, conveying that feeling of being on the outside looking in. The grown-up world is sometimes puzzling, even to grown-ups. Angie (January 16) and her friend Charmaine sit on a railway platform discussing men. Babies, they conclude, are a good thing and men, at best, a necessary evil. But perhaps the most telling comment on the adult world comes in the final film, as Gavin prepares for his common entrance exam. Under pressure from home and school, he wears the haunted look of someone condemned for a crime he didn't commit.

Robin Buss

Stage space

Studying Drama. By David Bradby, Philip Thomas and Kenneth Pickering.
Croom Helm £16.95. 0 7099 0650 1.

Studying Drama incorporates the combined wisdom of three dedicated practitioners of drama in education. It is a worthy, if dully written, book which will be welcomed by those teachers uncertain of their roles or of the new skills they are called upon to adopt "in departments that have their place within a faculty of arts or humanities". To the experienced the contents will be all too familiar.

However, the book "is intended primarily for undergraduates and A level students following courses in drama and theatre arts... The play in performance" is the object of study, and the authors rightly warn "that prejudice against the study of drama as a performing art as opposed to a branch of literature has been, and to some extent remains, strong". The material is laid out in three parts dealing, in turn, with stage space, the art of the actor, and with contextual

issues affecting the playwright. Parts I and III suggest project work. Part II recommends physical and vocal exercises for the aspirant performer. Each section concludes with a useful bibliography.

The trouble with such books is that their authors write about a discipline which is quintessentially active. Drama and acting skills are ideally acquired in practical sessions under expert guidance. Similarly, body training is safest and best when conducted by movement experts who can ensure that students don't suffer physical strain or damage. The kinds of exercise here presented are surely better left to trained professionals. Which leaves the book's theoretical insights. They are not so much new as better presented.

The writers' admirable intentions are, ironically, undermined by the very nature of the discipline they seek to promote. Active advocacy is to be preferred. Still, if there must be books on the subject, this is among the best.

David Blewitt

Spinning and weaving

From Fleece to Fabric. By June R Lewis.
Robert Hale £9.50. 0 7090 1211 7.

Spinning, dyeing and weaving have long been popular in America, where every large town now sports at least one thriving shop selling the tools of these trades. This reaction against technological sophistication has led to a corresponding fashion in Britain: books on these subjects now abound, some large and lavishly illustrated, others small, practical, and confined to diagrams and black and white photographs.

From *Fleece to Fabric* is a useful but notably unsexed example of the latter kind: the inept drawings in the closing chapter, which illustrate a variety of possible garments, would put off any clothes-conscious reader, and the appendix and glossary are skimpy compared with those of other manuals.

Ms Lewis may be an authority on spinning and weaving, but her book does not compare well with those already available at a similar price.

Betty Tadman

Set text

En Attendant Godot.
Bac to Bac Theatre Company, French Institute, December 8.

Beckett's play is one of the set books on the AEB French syllabus for June 1985, so this production is a well-timed addition to the repertoire of the Bac to Bac company whose work was described in *The TES* by E J Neather on October 28. To judge by reactions at the French Institute, it should go down well with its target audience of A level students, suitably prepared.

En Attendant Godot makes heavy demands on its two leading actors: not only are Vladimir and Estragon on stage throughout, they have to orchestrate the various tones and pace that will hold our attention and conjure up the fragile reality of their existence in the void. For me, Jeremy Newell and Andrew Colley inclined towards over-emphasis: real life, which this allegory parallels, is played more in the middle registers and only occasionally rises to a shout or falls to a whisper. But for an audience that has studied the text piecemeal in class, too much is certainly better than too little and these performances, sustained and enthusiastic, will bring the play alive.

Practical rather than artistic considerations probably dictated that Hélène Ford should be chosen for the Boy (in a mini-skirt, which is disarmingly unapologetic), but casting Judy Tanyar as Pozzo was a splendid idea: the ambiguity of her sex and dress allows her to pass convincingly from brutal menace to whining affectation. The most thankless part is Lucky's: he has to spend much of his time on stage in abject silence, apart from his lengthy parody of a learned discourse which Martin Sorrell delivered with style.

This is a purposeful and athletic production: I feared for Estragon at one point. Newell and Colley may irritate some linguists (a pedantic lot, on the whole) with their rare peculiarities of pronunciation or rhythm, but real teachers and real students will hardly believe their luck at being able to see this lively and polished creation of a difficult text.

Going native

George Orwell.
BBC2, December 29 - January 4.

Orwell never wanted anything written about himself because "he was really such a scrupulous writer that he didn't want any distractions from his writings," suggested Bernard Crick, Orwell's biographer, in the first of this series of five programmes shown last night on BBC2 (following closely on the heels of BBC1's tribute to the author of 1984) will bridge the old year and the new. The series, produced by Nigel Williams, is presented in a style which the great novelist and journalist would surely have approved of. Apart from essential link pieces, the commentary, tracing Orwell's life and the development of his political ideas, is almost entirely in the author's own words, interspersed with recollections from those who knew him.

Last night's episode covered Orwell's life from his birth in India, where his father was a civil servant, to his emergence as a writer with the publication of his first book *Down and Out in London and Paris* in 1933. Born Eric Arthur Blair on June 25, 1903, Orwell chose as his pen-name the name of his favourite river (after discarding the rather more prosaic *noms de plume* of H Lewis, Always, P noms de plume and Kenneth Miles). His first S Burton and Kenneth Miles. His first book describes his experiences as a tramp in London and as a waiter in Paris. He rewrote it five times before it was published by Gollancz. According to his former tailor, who checked out his orders for flannel trousers during this time, Orwell was never quite as down and out as he appeared to be, which supports the view that there is an element of fiction in his autobiography and an element of autobiography in his fiction.

The second in the series, shown tonight at 6.30pm on BBC2, retraces Orwell's steps in Wigan and Barnsley where he gathered information for his second book, *The Road to Wigan Pier*.



published in 1936. Orwell was commissioned by Gollancz to write an account of the lives of the unemployed in the Thirties and many of his descriptions of the "deadening effect of unemployment" sound equally applicable today. Quite a few Barnsley and Wigan families still remember Orwell. "Tall, thin, rather an unkempt mack and a dirty trilby hat", was the impression he left on one Wigan man.

In one of his obituaries, Orwell was described as "a writer who went native in his own country" but Malcolm Muggeridge said of him that "although he desperately tried to get inside the

Swan song

Nobody minds cardboard characters in Christmas shows as long as they tell good jokes and/or sing good songs. Unfortunately in *Swan* Esther at the Young Vic they do neither. Based on the Old Testament book of Esther, a tale of political intrigue and persecution, told in this version almost completely in song the show is a somewhat lacklustre affair.

Unfortunately many of Nick Munns' and Edward Oliver's songs particularly in the first half seem more like show stoppers than showstoppers. It's only in some of the second half numbers that chinks of the required razzle dazzle shine through. In general, the music is either dull or derivative. Sam Kelly's Mordecai (looking strangely like Donald Pleasance in the beer commercials) is likeable enough and Amanda Redman as the suspiciously Evita-like wise queen Esther sings with force and style. In fact the singing, particularly the harmonizing, is the show's only real strong point.

What *Swan* lacks is a sense of drama, even at the point of climax. The story should be dominated by the image of the gallows, from which the brave and wise Mordecai is saved in the nick of time by his dutiful ward Esther. Yet the audience never sees so much as a strand of rope. Haman, who gets it in the neck in Mordecai's place, seems more wicked than wicked. How can you have someone you feel sorry for?

Swan is director Frank Dunlop's swan song at the Young Vic. Unfortunately, it turns out to be no more than another seasonal turkey.

Nick Baker

Budding art historians might profitably invest £3.50 for one of the first publications to emerge under the new Flamingo paperback imprint: *The Letters of Vincent Van Gogh*, edited and introduced by Mark Roskill, are as illuminating of their author as were those of D H Lawrence.

Betka Zamoyska

BOOKS

Between medieval and modern

Sixteenth Century English Literature. By Murray Roston. Macmillan £12.00. 333 27143 2. £3.95. 27144 0.

Shakespeare's Language: An Introduction. By N F Blake. Macmillan £14.00. 333 28638 3. £3.95. 28639 1.

Shakespeare Stories. Edited and Introduced by Giles Gordon. Hamish Hamilton £7.95. 341 10879 9.

Murray Roston's is one of four volumes launching the Macmillan History of Literature, to be completed in 12 short books - this one has 235 pages - covering English literature from the Anglo-Saxons to today, with separate volumes on Scottish, Irish, Anglo-Irish, American, and Commonwealth writing. Historians, after long being frowned upon by the literary under-impudent element in literary under-impudent, and appreciation, and this history, with 12 splendid photographic reproductions in each volume, should serve admirably the needs of the non-specialist for general reference, studying for examinations up to university entrance, or reading for sheer pleasure.

Professor Roston wears his wide-ranging scholarship lightly, providing an overall unified and balanced concept of the whole literary field.

devoting most of his space to the major poets, dramatists and prose writers. Minor but still important figures are given brief treatment, but anything like a catalogue of names is scrupulously avoided. The whole volume appears to be free from obvious bias - except perhaps in its dismissive attitude to Shakespeare's late Romanesque, including the widely cherished *Tempest*.

Bias must not be confused, however, with strongly held and openly avowed convictions. Professor Roston is a self-proclaimed humanist; for him the new Renaissance humanism, for all its brilliant opening chapters, "The Dual Vision" and "In Search of a Poetic Style" though concluding, in support of his pro-Renaissance viewpoint, that "the search was less for new styles of thought" than for new styles of thought. In contrast, Professor Blake's book is for those Shakespearean specialists for whom the general matter of the plays is already thoroughly familiar material, and who also are conversant with the principles of structural analysis and believe in the relevance of linguistics to the study of literary texts. "Language" here does not refer to imagery or other poetic devices but simply to Shakespeare's use of words, their meaning, grammatical function, and syntax wherever these differ from

Tillyard's *The Elizabethan World Picture* where he insists, and goes on to demonstrate why, that "Actually it is in the purest medieval tradition". Yet both are true. The *Hamlet* passage uses like a catalogue of names is scrupulously avoided. The whole volume appears to be free from obvious bias - except perhaps in its dismissive attitude to Shakespeare's late Romanesque, including the widely cherished *Tempest*.

The sixteenth century was an age of transition between the medieval and the modern. Everything was in a state of flux - even the language was continually changing and evolving. Professor Roston concludes this in his brilliant opening chapters, "The Dual Vision" and "In Search of a Poetic Style" though concluding, in support of his pro-Renaissance viewpoint, that "the search was less for new styles of thought" than for new styles of thought. In contrast, Professor Blake's book is for those Shakespearean specialists for whom the general matter of the plays is already thoroughly familiar material, and who also are conversant with the principles of structural analysis and believe in the relevance of linguistics to the study of literary texts. "Language" here does not refer to imagery or other poetic devices but simply to Shakespeare's use of words, their meaning, grammatical function, and syntax wherever these differ from

present usage. The chaotic state of Elizabethan language in all its aspects is repeatedly stressed: no precise rules, no grammar books, even the parts of speech not settled, with Shakespeare, we are told (page 51) using "destruction" as a verb.

Shakespeare Stories, by "20 of our best writers [1], inspired by or derived from Shakespeare" is, almost inevitably, a mixed bag: amusing ones by Salman Rushdie on Yorick, or Robert Nye's witty and bawdy - "The Second Best Bed", thoughtfully interesting ones by Francis King and Iain Crichton on a powerful one on the identity of the Third Murderer in *Macbeth* by Fred Urquhart; a few undistinguished, a few "also-ran"; and, as the editor realized, one miniature masterpiece: Paul Ableman's account of a delicate, idealistic love relationship between Edgar and Cordelia, first mutually confessed only a few minutes before the ominous opening words of the play dramatically end the story. No reader will ever see *King Lear* in quite the same light again: a new, small dimension will have been added.

So - a bit of a publishing gimmick, but these stories make "a good read" and the light-weight except for Ableman's and perhaps Urquhart's and King's, but enjoyable, and attractively produced.

Hermann Peschmann

Great themes

Public and Private Man in Shakespeare. By James Gregson. Croom Helm £13.95. 0 7099 1124 6

Shakespeare's Theatre. By Peter Thomson. Routledge & Kegan Paul £8.95. 0 7100 9480 0

Much of *Public and Private Man in Shakespeare* is not new - after 300 years of Shakespeare criticism one would hardly expect it. Most of the conclusions, suggestions, perceptions have appeared elsewhere as is well recognized by the author himself. What is new is the ordering of the material to develop consistently what James Gregson considers the main themes of the great play, namely, Shakespeare's preoccupation with the conflict between the individual, private man and the public figure, and the corruption of power.

In *Richard II*, the poetic individual is vanquished by the calculating schemer who ultimately loses his private personality in his public persona, although, as James Gregson points out, it is the "loser" who holds and enthalls the audience. The fallible Antony loses to the austere, Roman Octavius and in his own inner, personal conflict he is the public man who is destroyed by the lover of Cleopatra's heroic stature. The development of Prince Hal into Henry V is dealt with in not quite the usual way and Othello, successful public man, is shown as helplessly at the mercy of domestic problems - Iago being the instrument of discord and collapse in the sphere as much as the arch-villain that he certainly is in his own right - in the unfamiliar private life that his marriage has created for him. As would be expected in such a work, *Hamlet*, *Lear* and *Macbeth* are studied in detail as are some of the even more difficult and controversial plays.

As Granville Barker has said, more than one mind is required to attempt the reconstruction of Shakespeare's theatre and stage and the degree to which these affected the plays themselves. So the fact that Professor Thomson is only one of many who have pored over the contemporary diaries, sketches and reports, over the plays themselves and criticisms from the seventeenth century to the present day does not lessen the value of anything he writes. It is disappointing that realistic he has pointed out that "this wooden O", the Globe Theatre, was more probably polygonal, the nature of wood and the character of practical carpentry being taken into account; but it is such practical commonsense that characterizes Peter Thomson's approach to the plays and their staging.

When dealing with the playhouses themselves and exploring the evidence for scenery, inner and upper stages, the positioning of musicians, trapdoors, scenic effects and the nature and placing of the audiences, the author's style is clear and succinct and the material well-presented and of great interest. This is also true when he discusses the formation of the companies of actors, in particular the Men, and the influence of business interests on them, the playhouse and the plays themselves. True, too, of the chapter entitled *Macbeth*, from the staging in detail as coped with by the playwright men and all those engaged backstage. However, the two chapters on *Twelfth Night* and *Hamlet* are not so happily contrived, the author having allowed himself to stray from the path of practical stagecraft into discussing also the literary aspect of the plays which he does less well.

The notes and bibliographies are excellent and the three appendices well-chosen.

Juliet Heslewood has similar, though less severe, trouble with her dialogue in *Tales of Sea and Shore*. The cabin boy Ian's cry of "I don't know nothing any more I don't, but I know there's something fishy goin' on up there!" in "The Kobold and the Pirate" falls comically short of the colour and vitality at which it aims. The 20 stories, drawn from all over the world, are retold in a workmanlike but uninspired prose enlivened, by Edward Mortelmans' evocative and dramatic full-colour pictures.

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no editor thought to tell him "cut that talk".

Both these books will give pleasure. But they both lack the rough intimacy of the storyteller who trusts his tale and knows his audience; all his hesitations and awkwardnesses stem from uncertainty of tone. They are both divided; Abranson between the fascinating book he could write and the formula book he tried to write, and Heslewood between her conflicting desires for variety of material but uniformity of approach.

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Katya Walter

Old and new approaches to chemistry

Introduction to Physical Chemistry. By G I Brown. Longman £5.95. 582 35365 3

Comprehensive Chemistry. By J Hicks. Macmillan £6.95. 0 333 33154 0

Organic Chemistry. By C B Hunt and A K Holliday. Butterworths. 0 408 70915 4

Over the last 10 years, most Advanced level examination syllabuses have been modified, placing greater emphasis on principle and concept, less on rote learning; a trend reflected in most modern textbooks. It is therefore a salutary experience to evaluate two traditional textbooks (Brown and Hicks) which have sold steadily throughout the last 20 years, and a further book that relies, in the author's words, on the "tried and trusted" style.

There is much to praise in this approach. The descriptive material so often skimped in modern books is well treated, especially so in the organic chemistry area. Each book contains the principles, concepts and fundamental ideas but they are integrated within the text, or provide a rationalizing factor, rather than being the foundation on which the edifice of chemistry is built. Such an approach will appeal to many teachers who will feel that this style suits their particular teaching method.

Brown's *Physical Chemistry*, now in its third edition has undergone extensive revision. The aims are as they were 20 years ago, to produce an A level text suitable for most exam

syllabuses, to arouse interest in the subject and to avoid a too mathematical approach. The revision was necessary to match the text to the content of new examinations, while retaining a balanced and complete picture of the subject.

Topics which have declined in importance, such as transport numbers and phase rule, have been omitted, or drastically cut, while spectroscopy and very fast reactions, for example, are now included. Other areas have been updated, hybridization and delocalization are now thoroughly discussed, and the determination of the relative molecular mass of volatile liquids is described using the gas syringe method rather than Victor Meyer or Dumas method. The calculation for this practical is based on the molar gas volume, rather than using the more fundamental general gas equation favoured by most modern books and exam boards.

The text is well set out, headings are clear, the sequence logical, a generous number of diagrams are included, and the mathematics are well integrated into the text - in all the impression is more inviting and pleasing than the previous edition. The written style is a little formal still, although it is clear and to the point. There are a vast number of questions, well over 700, but many are little more than academic or technical exercises, requiring substitution into equations. Few require genuine thought or relate the topic to wider aspects of the subject, ie industrial or the environment. It would have been helpful if a wider variety of

question style were included, structured questions, comprehension exercises or objective tests for example. If you liked the early editions, you will undoubtedly warm to this book - it retains the strengths of the original but is now more modern and "in line" with current examinations. It stands as a traditional alternative to recent texts such as Liptrout and Atkins.

Comprehensive Chemistry is also a 20-year-old veteran, now in its third edition. Ten years ago it was revised, modernizing the units, but this edition contains no major change other than the addition of an excellent chapter on environmental chemistry, a topic which was probably the most serious omission from previous volumes. The author surveys the impact of various chemicals on the environment, concentrating on pollution of the atmosphere and hydrosphere, discussing in detail problems associated with sewage, lead, asbestos, pesticides, oil, and mercury. Graphic examples are given of how the problems are caused, how the pollutants are transported, the effects they can have, and how such problems are being dealt with.

It is a reliable source, but there is too little importance paid to the application of principle and basic concept. In the chapters on organic chemistry, a catalogue of reactions is given, whereas there are basic principles which can be used to rationalize information - the interconversion of acid derivatives, or comparison of hydrolysis of halogeno-compounds spring to mind.

Some of the factual material is a little dated, the use of quartz in watches is not mentioned under silicon

dioxide, and topics important for examinations are sometimes omitted - the explanation for the relative ease of hydrolysis of tetrachloromethane and silicon tetrachloride, for example. The revision should also have been used to update the rather old fashioned nomenclature, cuprous oxide and the ethylene dichloride are typical, in the same way that units have been modernized. There is a brief appendix which outlines modern nomenclature in little over one side. A chapter on organic mechanism is included at the end of the descriptive chemistry of organic compounds, rather than being integrated with the relevant functional group chapter. Over 300 questions are given at the end of the book, all questions being taken from A level papers, but again there is an emphasis on calculation and essay-style questions.

The style is formal, and possibly a little too demanding for the overseas market. The book has a slightly indigestible feel, although this is perhaps inevitable with 900 pages of close print in a small format. However, it is factually sound, covers almost all syllabuses (and more - arsenic and antimony are still included) and the price is reasonable.

Organic Chemistry is part of a new three volume series of A level texts. It presumably replaces Wood and Kelladay, one of the recommended texts two decades ago, but although it shares some of the hallmarks of its predecessor - clarity, sound organization, pleasing style - it is a totally new book, with a more modern emphasis, and containing many additional chapters

on areas of current interest, notably structure and bonding, mechanism, and large molecules. The authors have adopted a traditional approach, using clear concise explanation of essential concepts, detailed description with full conditions for each reaction, a point often missed out of more modern texts.

Aliphatic and aromatic chemistry are separated. The authors argue that this approach allows aromatic chemistry to be used as a revision topic and avoids unnecessary complication for the less able. Great emphasis is placed on the classification of reaction types, with mechanism being discussed at the end of each section, so that it acts as a rationalizing tool rather than as a predictor. This balance between description and principle is one of the great strengths. Practical details are not given, and supplementary details are required, although chapters on purification and structure are given at the end of the book.

Each chapter begins by discussing physical data, and proceeds to cover preparations and reactions. Distinguishing tests are thoroughly discussed and a summary is provided, often in the form of a flow chart. At the end of each chapter are brief questions, but a large range of recent A level questions are given as an appendix.

In all this is a most recommendable text, showing an impressive compromise between traditional and modern approaches, and being entirely suitable for any type of course.

Chris and Pat Mason

Learn with the children

The Teaching of Primary Science: Policy and Practice. By Derek Holford. The Falmer Press Curriculum Series £6.50 and £11.95.

Practical Primary Science: A Source Book for Teachers. By Romola Shewell. Ward Lock Educational £3.95.

The Teaching of Primary Science is one of a series under the generic title of a Curriculum Series for Teachers, and a glance at other titles suggests that some are concerned more directly with curriculum planning in the classroom, others with a more general overview of what has happened and is happening in a particular curriculum area. This book falls into the latter category, and the editors suggest in their introduction that it is suitable for pre-service students as part of their background knowledge, and for practising teachers with career ambitions as an aid to deepening and sharpening their perspective on the primary curriculum in general and the science area in particular. This intention is pretty well reflected in the selection of articles forming this reader.

It opens with a typically pungent and thought-provoking introduction by Colin Richards in which he makes a general use of science to illustrate a general exposition of some key issues in the primary curriculum. (One suspects that he could have done equally well with any other area.)

One such issue is that of process versus content, a particularly knotty one as far as science in the primary school is concerned. A number of the articles contribute to this debate, some more directly than others. Those by Wynne Harlen and Gerry McClelland are significant in discussing the way the pendulum has swung somewhat away from the post-Plowden orthodoxy that placed little if any value on the content. Ann Squires has some useful things to say on this, as do those contributing to the section entitled "Practice".

Theories of children's learning having particular reference to science are addressed in two excellent articles. The first, by Nathan Isaacs, remains a seminal statement even though it was made over 20 years ago, and Gerry McClelland's contribution is exemplary in deriving practice from well grounded theory.

No book of this kind would be

complete without some appraisal of the major curriculum writers and have very helpful commentaries and evaluations on the Oxford Primary School Project, Nuffield Junior (and Combined) Science, Science 5-13, and Practical Primary Science - all written in authoritative style and often by those who were directly concerned as directors or team members, and representing a very valuable and concise source of comparative material.

As one must expect in a reader, the quality of the writing varies, but on the whole it is readable and interesting. Peter Evans's article, in which he erects a powerful and persuasive case for the teaching of applied as well as (or is it instead?) pure science to primary children, is memorable not only for its content, but especially for the forthright and sardonic style in which it is couched. Here is a head-teacher who knows his own mind and states his views in a most refreshing way.

This is a substantial book, containing 25 articles drawn from a number of sources including the DES and TES, but most significantly from *Education 3-13*. In trying to assess a publication of this sort, one should ask whether it fulfils a need. In the field of primary science there is not only a considerable and growing literature (and the annotated bibliography compiled by Robert England is a very helpful final section), but a clearly felt anxiety in the schools, so that the arrival on the scene of a fair, well rounded and informed picture of the present state of things is timely. Further criteria of judgment particularly relevant to a reader are whether the intended or implied structure is real or merely contrived, and whether it succumbs to producing coherence out of a group of diverse materials. I think it is right to congratulate Colin Richards and Derek Holford on the astute way in which they have marshalled and arranged these to produce a book deserving of a prominent place on the curriculum development shelves.

Romola Shewell makes the most modest claims for her book, *Practical Primary Science*. It is intended, she states, "for any primary teacher who wants some ideas for starting science". As a director of a busy teachers' centre she is well placed to know what the customers want, and no doubt much of

the material for her book is based on "what the primary school teacher has to do" - it is reminiscent of the sixties when she writes, in the introduction, "Traditionally science in schools has been divided into biology, chemistry and physics. For primary children, however, these divisions are too structured". One wonders where the teachers she is addressing have been all these years. Have they not encountered Plowden, the 1978 Primary Survey, or The School Curriculum of 1981?

There is no attempt in this book to justify the teaching of science to primary children. The selection of content is presented baldly without any reference to an overarching conceptual framework related to some notion about children's intellectual development. This is not to say that the content is anything but sound. Each topic is presented in a matter-of-fact way, using a consistent framework: the topic is introduced, followed by General Notes, Activities and Experiments, Developments, Links, and comments with Resources and Support material. In other words, a straightforward, eminently practical book, as its title suggests.

Romola Shewell is an enthusiast and wants to encourage others to "have a go", and to "learn with the children". There is an uncomfortable assumption that you can teach science with little or no background knowledge, so long as you have access to some "off the peg" topics that have been selected and structured for you in books such as this. Perhaps her own knowledge and experience serve to blind her to the fact that you really need to understand your material thoroughly if you are to teach it successfully. (Has anyone suggested we should "learn with the children" in mathematics, or in language? "Living in Water", one is soon confronted with what to the uninitiated would be a confusing variety of species, such as Filamentous algae, Paramecium, and Coelenterates. Could a teacher with no training in biology cope with a topic like this?

The intention is in itself sound. That said, the content is in itself sound. That a need for this sort of thing exists is certainly the case, and it should sell like hot cakes.

Philip Hych

Charted

Chemistry. By R F G Nash. Macmillan £1.55. 333 34003 5.

This revision book is designed to cover all the work required for most O level syllabuses. It contains all the topics, ranging from "States of Matter" to "Confirmatory tests for positive ions"; notable omissions are equilibrium and radioactivity. Most topics are covered in two or three pages, with extensive use of tables and charts for concise summaries. The charts are well-constructed, but for some the layout is rather cramped so that they may appear needlessly difficult.

An unusual feature is the use of flow diagrams for the presentation of all calculations and worked examples. These have been well thought-out and are intended to facilitate students' understanding, but some students may need help in interpreting them at first. Apart from one topic - on "practical techniques", which covers gas preparations and methods of separation - there are few references to, or descriptions of, experiments; these may be unnecessary in a revision text, but some boards seem to expect a detailed knowledge of certain experiments. No practice questions are included, but practice questions are recommended to find questions from past papers.

The more able O level candidates may find this book useful, as it should help them in structuring their revision and improving their note-making skills.

Lynne Marjoram

Wingbeats

Butterflies, a colour field guide. By M Devorence. David and Charles £6.95. 0 7153 8488 0.

The Butterflies of Britain and Europe. By Lionel Higgins and Brian Hargraves. Collins £5.50. 0 00 219702 2.

Entomologists will want to possess both these books for, in their different style, each will assist in the identification of the butterflies of western Europe. The *Colour Field Guide* is illustrated with excellent photographs showing the insects in their natural habitat, their biology and behaviour being described in a series of pictograms on the same page.

The *Butterflies of Britain and Europe* is more complete in that it gives, in their natural size, colour paintings of the male and female forms and also the upper and under wings. Other information includes a special section showing the caterpillars and chrysalises of all the families.

Both books deal adequately with the distribution of the different species. There is no doubt that once the simple "rules" governing the use of the pictograms are mastered, the photographs make the *Colour Field Guide* a very attractive book. Many naturalists, however, will prefer the more straightforward approach of the Collins book and will particularly appreciate the special maps showing the distribution of British species. It would probably be the better choice for a working manual.

R C Vernon

lingo

Words may not hurt as much as sticks and stones, but their wounds may go deeper and last longer. So all dictionaries that enter words like *wog*, *yid*, and indeed *papsit*, label them as insults. Yet no dictionary labels *thug* or *villain*. With *papsit*, *wog*, and *yid*, society (says its dictionaries) dis-

approve the insults they receive? The words *dikeldyke*, *nancy*, *pansy*, and *queer* are "derogatory" in the *Longman New Universal Dictionary*, but not in the *Concise Oxford*, *Collins English*, or *Chambers 20th Century*. So for *Longman*, *pansy* is like *wog*, whereas for the other dictionaries, *pansy* is like *thug*.

Moreover, words can offend unintentionally. When an adult woman is called a *girl* - so that mixed doubles are played by *men* and *girls* - are women offended? Not according to any British dictionary. But in America the latest *Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary* says it's "sometimes taken to be offensive". A British-American difference? Or a British lexicographic oversight?

Sex, sexuality, race, and religion - these are not the only areas where words can hurt. People who like the Merriam-Webster treatment of *girl* may well ask, to take but one example, whether any dictionary will ever label *mingol* - a word that, however innocently used, may offend both people with Down's syndrome and inhabitants of Mongolia. After all, lexicography is, in part, knowing when to say your sorry.

Robert Ilson

The Economics of Education. By Brian Atkinson. Hodder and Stoughton £5.95. 0 340 33729 X.

As the cuts continue, a new book raises timely questions about where money for education comes from and how it is spent. Brian Atkinson, who is senior lecturer in economics at Preston Polytechnic, discusses whether education can be evaluated in terms of cost-effectiveness (are there, for instance, ideal sizes for classes and schools?) and considers possible Government policies, such as voucher schemes and student loans. He also looks at the changing sources of decision-making and the growing fears of a central government takeover.

Biddy Passmore



Don Charlwood's *The Long Farewell* (Penguin £4.95) is an illustrated account of the settlers' voyages to Australia in the mid-nineteenth century. Abundant eye-witness stories lend vividness to the narrative. Above, life in the steerage area.

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Setting sail

Stories of the Sea. By Erik C Abranson. Illustrated by Edward Mortelmans. Hodder and Stoughton £4.95. 0 340 27137 X.

Tales of Sea and Shore. By Juliet Heslewood. Illustrated by Karen Berry. Oxford University Press £6.95. 0 19 278105 7.

Seafarers' yarns provide a rich body of story, anecdote and legend, on which

Erik Abranson has drawn to construct a celebration of the days of the "tall ships". Abranson is an enthusiast, and his own pleasure in his subject over-rides his flaws of presentation. An uneven text is helped, too, by Edward Mortelmans' evocative and dramatic full-colour pictures.

The book is a series of narratives - some famous, such as the story of the Mary Celeste, other less-known, such as the tales of lost ships found years later encased in ice, their crews dead and the log book recording their fate - which provide pogo for Abranson's personal commentary on the life and lore of the sea. He is not really interested in them as stories in themselves, and his book is best when he speaks from his own experience. Elsewhere - for instance, in the Mary Celeste chapter - the sea tang evokes rates. Where he does try to bring the tales to life, his writing, which can be loose and companionable, seizes up. His historical dialogue is particularly lamentable: "Cut that talk, man, and pick thyself up!" Jennings retorted somewhat too quickly, "or despatch thee a nigger!" Abranson's book has many attractive qualities; it is a shame

no editor thought to tell him "cut that talk".

Juliet Heslewood has similar, though less severe, trouble with her dialogue in *Tales of Sea and Shore*. The cabin boy Ian's cry of "I don't know nothing any more I don't, but I know there's something fishy goin' on up there!" in "The Kobold and the Pirate" falls comically short of the colour and vitality at which it aims. The 20 stories, drawn from all over the world, are retold in a workmanlike but uninspired prose enlivened, by Edward Mortelmans' evocative and dramatic full-colour pictures.

The book is a series of narratives - some famous, such as the story of the Mary Celeste, other less-known, such as the tales of lost ships found years later encased in ice, their crews dead and the log book recording their fate - which provide pogo for Abranson's personal commentary on the life and lore of the sea. He is not really interested in them as stories in themselves, and his book is best when he speaks from his own experience. Elsewhere - for instance, in the Mary Celeste chapter - the sea tang evokes rates. Where he does try to bring the tales to life, his writing, which can be loose and companionable, seizes up. His historical dialogue is particularly lamentable: "Cut that talk, man, and pick thyself up!" Jennings retorted somewhat too quickly, "or despatch thee a nigger!" Abranson's book has many attractive qualities; it is a shame

no editor thought to tell him "cut that talk".

Neil Philip

SCIENCE BOOKS

Physics for Scots

Higher Physics. By Jim Jardine. Heinemann Educational Books £5.50. 0 435 68221 0.

Essentials of Higher Physics. By Mary Webster. Heinemann Educational Books £4.95. 0 435 68836 7.

Higher Physics is the latest in a long line of superb pupil texts by this well-known author. It is essentially a revised version of his *Nat Phil 5*, updated to cater for the new Higher Grade physics syllabus and, in its style, follows the same winning formula as its predecessors. The text is clear and easy to read with excellent, and at times humorous, diagrams and drawings and many interesting and topical photographs, some of which are in colour. These include pictures of the lift-off of the Space Shuttle and of the comet, Kohoutek, taken from Skylab. Key words in the body of the text are in heavy type and key formulae clearly stand out and are encircled for emphasis. Throughout the text, worked examples are provided at appropriate points, and at the end of each section of making up each of the four sections of the book, a number of carefully selected problems of varying difficulty is supplied. These include SCEEB questions to 1982.

In content, the book is divided into four sections corresponding to N, O, P and Q of the new syllabus (no section R) and follows the published order of it. It makes the assumption that the user is already familiar with the first two cycles of the Scottish physics syllabus. Much of the content is similar to *Nat Phil 5* but there is much that is

different and there has been a re-organization of material to accommodate the new syllabus. We thus have Section N: Mechanics; Section O: Electricity; Section P: Optics and Radiation and Section Q: Models, Atomic and Nuclear Models. As required for the new syllabus, there has been a much greater emphasis on the applications of physics and the theory of good introduction to the theory of errors in the first chapter. The material covers all of the published specific objectives including those which may not have been over-stressed in the past eg unbalanced current in a Wheatstone Bridge. At the end of each chapter, there is a succinct review including relevant revision material from the second cycle.

With regard to practical work, key experiments stand out on a pink background and discuss use of the most up-to-date resources - eg micro-computer or microprocessor as an accelerometer. The greater emphasis on language across the curriculum and on practical investigations and reporting thereof find expression in what Jardine calls the "team investigation" and one or more of those is included at the end of each chapter.

There is no mention of section R dealing exclusively with applications of physics and for which Memoranda have been produced for the first seven topics to be examined in 1984. Those Memoranda have been a little disappointing, with one or possibly two exceptions which are in an immediately usable form for teachers and pupils. The treatment of those topics would have greatly benefited from Jardine's

style and lucid exposition and it is to be hoped that he will include them in later editions of this excellent work.

Mary Webster has chosen her title well - essentially only are supplied in her book. Unlike *Higher Physics*, it is not so much a background or reference text as a good set of pupil notes for revision purposes. First published in 1978 for the old syllabus, this new 1983 edition does not seem to have been updated for the new syllabus. Topics such as the manometer (page 38), mechanical oscillations (page 128), electrical circuits (page 132) and radio communication (page 150) are now not "essential" (although possibly of some use in Section R) so rendering her title less relevant.

Unlike Jardine's Mrs Webster's book includes the O Grade material needed for H Grade work and, without it, would be a much slimmer volume. She does this by such devices as integrating the study of Heat, ie the specific and latent heat and the gas laws, normally covered in the O cycle, with Kinetic Theory in the chapter on Properties of Matter.

The book is, however, thoroughly written with many worked examples in the text and further problems at the end of each chapter. There is, in addition, an exercise section of over 100 problems at the end. Answers are supplied for all of those but no SCEEB questions are supplied. Throughout the book, important facts or formulae are boxed-in for emphasis.

This is an excellent text, and will, by its very "set of notes" nature, appeal to many teachers.

Walter J MacCulloch



The caterpillar of the Emperor Gum Moth from Australia. Oxford Scientific Films have produced photographs to their usual standard to tell *The Silkworm Story* (Deutsch £2.99)

Into the blue

The Space Shuttle Action Book. By Tom Stimpson, Vic Duppia-Whyte and Patrick Moore. Aurum Press £5.95 906053 36 6.

Moonquake. By Roy Bentley. Deutsch £4.95 223 97533 0.

The Young Astronomer. By Sheila Snowden. Usborne £3.95 086020 6521 and £1.99 86020 6513.

The present batch of three astronomy and space books aimed at readers in the age group from about 8 to 12 offers two unconventional approaches and one traditional, proven technique. The most exciting is *The Space Shuttle Action Book*, one of the current batch of "pop up" books. Although his name appears on the front of the book, Patrick Moore will not mind me pointing out that it is not his work.

Accompanying the superb "paper engineering" of Vic Duppia-Whyte and the artwork of Tom Stimpson. The result is a book which contains enough drama and action to appeal to the youngest members of the intended age group, plus enough scientific accuracy to please the most well-informed 12-year-old.

It is highly unlikely that any of the young readers will actually learn anything directly from the book, but it brings to life things that they have read about elsewhere, or seen on television. Essentially, it is a fun book and deserves to tell hugely in that context.

But it could also be a very useful classroom aid for any discussion about current developments in manned space flight.

Roy Bentley's approach is to slip "real" science into the reader's consciousness (or subconscious) in the guise of fiction. *Moonquake* has a little more text than *The Space Shuttle Action Book*, but not much. Most of

each page is taken up by colourful illustrations related to the simple adventure story about four space cadets involved in the lunar equivalent of an earthquake. The text is banal and not particularly accurate - there is no evidence that the moon does experience this sort of seismic disruption. But my seven-year-old son thought it was "really good", as my resident 11-year-old said it was "boring".

A reasonably able class of 10-year-olds ought to be able to produce something just as good for themselves, perhaps as a wall strip, and I can't see why anyone would want to spend £4.95 on this book.

I can, however, envisage a lot of people laying out £1.99 for the latest of "pop up" books. *The Young Astronomer*. Like books about astronomy, it seems to be published every few weeks, and they all seem to sell. There must be a lot of people out there looking at the night sky with binoculars or telescopes - especially in the clear nights of autumn and winter - and Osborn's

variation on the theme is as good a guide as any for the complete beginner. It starts from such practicalities as the need for warm clothing and a hot drink, provides star charts and an explanation of why the constellations move across the sky, describes the nature and evolution of stars and planets, and points the young reader in the right direction to follow this hobby seriously.

In terms of value for money, then, the traditional approach wins hands down. In terms of an exciting and probably short-lived toy, the pop up book of the shuttle scores handsomely as the festive season approaches. But *Moonquake* shows that just because an approach is new, it doesn't mean that it is good.

John Gribbin

Question tests

Objective Questions: Physics. By Michael Shepherd. Charles Letts Books £2.25. 85097 575 1.

A book of revision questions for O level and CSE physics which contains nearly 500 questions and answers represents very good value at the price. The text is attractively presented in an A4 format, with plentiful diagrams, frequently improved by the use of a second colour. The book is intended for use in systematic revision in conjunction with the same author's *Revised Physics*, which is divided into the same 28 topics.

Dr Shepherd provides a valuable preface to help students get maximum benefit from the book. There is a clear summary of the type of multiple choice and other questions employed by the different examining bodies, and a list of the boards' addresses. Pupils will also be pleased to find not only numerical answers but single sentence answers to short answer questions.

Unfortunately there are errors, both in

spelling (schlerotic, scalar) and in answers to questions. For example, a propeller viewed through a stroboscope disc will be seen as a cross not a star (Q 17.2); a magnet can be created by placing a magnetic material in a coil carrying a.c. (Q 22.2); the charge on an electroscope leaf is incorrectly given as negative (Q 23.8); resistance does depend on the density of the material of the wire (Q 24.13).

Occasionally the terseness of one sentence answers misleads: the centripetal force on the Moon as it orbits the Earth is provided by gravitational attraction, but it would be more helpful to add that this is the attraction between the Moon and the Earth, which some students would not deduce from the answer in the book.

These small faults do not significantly detract from the value of this new book. It is an excellent revision aid and can be recommended to any pupil prepared to devote a reasonable time to examination preparation.

M D Joyce

Wider horizons

Chemistry for Colleges and Schools. By D A Robinson and J M Wollard. Macmillan £8.95. 0 333 26192 5.

Basic Physical Chemistry. By W J Moore. Prentice-Hall £10.95. 13 057703 0.

Physical Chemistry. By I N Levine. McGraw-Hill £27.75. 0 07 037421 X. £9.50 07066 388 2.

Most educationists choose a textbook that reflects or complements their teaching, matching the depth of treatment to the demands of the syllabus. Occasionally, students of real ability at A level require greater depth of understanding, or more detail, or ask a particularly perceptive question. Each of the following books although geared to a "higher level" may well prove invaluable in such a situation, either to read in part by the student, under the direction of the teacher, or perhaps to allow the tutor a greater depth of understanding that can be passed on in turn to the student.

Robinson and Wollard have produced a textbook covering the whole of chemistry at an introductory level for colleges, although it has much relevance and interest for A level courses at school. The authors aim to produce a concise, simply-written text covering as broad a range of material as possible, but successfully avoiding the common pitfalls of a superficial treatment of organic chemistry, of the overemphasis on mathematical aspects of the subject, and of covering the material in such depth that a large tome full of daunting and difficult vocabulary is produced. There is no doubt that the authors have succeeded in their aim and have produced a most lively and challenging textbook.

Inevitably the text is broken up into the three traditional areas. Physical chemistry uses thermodynamics, equilibrium and kinetics as unifying topics, providing a framework and linking all the other sections together. The depth of treatment of some topics is considerably above A level, but the authors are skilled in presenting topics such as wave mechanics, molecular orbital theory, and quantum chemistry in a way that is accessible to A level students. The text is well written, clear and easy to read, and the authors' enthusiasm for the subject is evident throughout.

Inorganic chemistry covers periodicity s-block etc but the p-block is dealt with in one chapter. This has the advantage that general principles and trends are clearly explained but inevitably such an approach lacks the detail required for A level, the oxidizing power and thermal decomposition of lead (IV) oxide is not mentioned for example. Such criticism perhaps misses the point of the authors' philosophy, since it provides a well thought out alternative to the descriptive approach adopted by many books.

In flight

How Birds Work. By Ron Freethy. Blandford £8.95. 0 7137 11566.

Ron Freethy, a biology teacher and ornithological lecturer, has added personal style and relevant examples to an impressive amount of zoological fact. Not that *How Birds Work* is a massive tome; on the contrary, it is entirely manageable and readable.

The 12 chapters commence with evolution and classification. Obviously, the latter has required much judicious pruning, but there is enough to convey some understanding of the features used to distinguish the orders and important families. A comprehensive bibliography is included at the end. Anatomy and flight have also attained chapter status, while comprehensive physiological information on, for example breathing, respiration, feeding, nutrition and the special senses, is also provided. A discussion of migration and behaviour is virtually essential in any book of this kind, though to cover all aspects would be inappropriate. There is, however, enough to wet one's appetite and provide an introduction to these important areas. Mr Freethy has limited the use of technical language and included relevant background information which will help his audience to comprehend some of the more complicated ideas.

This is a well-illustrated little volume which certainly qualifies for inclusion in the senior section of the school library. Keen lay birdwatchers, who don't have specialized knowledge of the subjects covered, should also find it worth reading.

Peter J Baron

Revision

Graded Examples for O Level Physics 3rd edition. By C B Folland. John Murray £1.60. 0 7195 4087 9.

A third edition of this popular booklet contains over 350 numerical questions designed to cover the various O level syllabuses, including revisions since 1976. For the student using this book on his own each of the forty subsections starts with one or two worked

There is a similar situation in organic chemistry, which is based very much on principle and mechanism. In a way this text offers an attractive complement to a book such as Hicks.

The book is very well produced, the layout is excellent, pages are well organized and the writing has clarity and precision without being too academic.

Although the authors state it is aimed at A level, there is too much detail omitted for this to be considered a standard text, but where more advanced and sophisticated ideas are required, for Oxbridge students, or to stimulate a teacher, this book will prove to be invaluable. I would anticipate a ready market overseas and in UK at college.

Walter Moore will be known to many chemistry teachers from their undergraduate days, as his *Physical Chemistry* was one of the standard texts in the fifties and sixties. *Basic Physical Chemistry* is in the same mould, although it appears to be aimed at the overseas university system, where it is directed towards science and engineering students who need a basic foundation in physical chemistry for a one year course. The text proceeds from considerations of general ideas of molecules and their energy states to thermodynamics, with sections on equilibria, rates, electrochemistry, bonding and spectra for example. The treatment is rigorous with an emphasis on mathematics, but the text is lively, inviting, relevant and very clear with many analogies for clarification. Diagrams are clear, sample calculations are included, the presentation is clear and material well structured. This will be a useful reference for teachers at school and college, who need to update their knowledge, or who need refreshing on some detail. It will undoubtedly be invaluable material for the FE and HE sectors.

Ira Levine's text covers the same ground. It is aimed specifically at the American undergraduate market, and places great emphasis on clarity, accuracy and depth. The presentation is certainly easy to follow, explains, in depth understanding of all aspects of the subject. Each chapter has a useful summary, a generous number of worked examples, and short, easy to follow sections. Peripheral material is relegated to small print, so as not to interrupt the flow. New topics, such as photoelectron spectroscopy, ion cyclotron resonance and field ion microscopy are included. The strength of the books is its lucid explanation, its rigour and its relevance, particularly in view of the biological example it gives.

Each of these degree level texts will prove to be stimulating reading. It is all too easy for teachers to limit their horizon at A level, yet these texts will throw their teaching into sharp relief.

Chris and Pat Mason

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Peter J Baron

SCIENCE BOOKS

Star-gazing

Patrick Moore's History of Astronomy. By Patrick Moore. Text and illustrations by Michael Marten. Macdonald £14.95.

The New Solar System (second edition). Edited by J. K. Beatty, B. O'Leary, A. Chalkin. Cambridge University Press £12.50.

The New Astronomy. By Nigel Henbest and Michael Marten. Cambridge University Press £12.50.

The old and the new astronomy are well represented in this batch of large format, well illustrated and modestly priced books. But only one of them touches on the newest and most exciting astronomy of today, the others are both histories of astronomy. Patrick Moore's version itself has a long history. Back in 1961, Moore produced a book called *Astronomy*. It went through several revisions and a change of publishers, metamorphosing into *The History of Astronomy* in 1972 and being reprinted through the 1970s. Now, revised extensively yet again, it appears with the author's name prominently above the title but as part of the title.

This is not just a sign of the growth of Patrick Moore's own audience, but an accurate indication of the content. This is what we might call "Patrick Moore astronomy", the traditional astronomy of telescopes, constellations, stars and planets. The discussion of galaxies is slight, and cosmology gets no more than a dutiful summary of the Big Bang theory and a mention of the Steady State hypothesis. Slightly surprisingly, however, Moore seems to be quite taken with the idea, recently put forward by Victor Clube and Bill Napier, of the Scottish Royal Observatory, that collisions with comets may account for many of the Biblical and mythological catastrophes of the

The weather of Venus and Mars; the volcanoes of Io; Jupiter's Great Red Spot; Saturn's rings. All these and many more features of the Solar

Earth's history and pre-history. Apart from that, the only parts of this book that might have seemed surprising to an astronomer in 1961 are some of the discoveries from the unmanned missions to the planets of our Solar System. Black holes, though mentioned on the jacket of the book, are not to be found in the index; quasars receive short shrift; the fascinating puzzle of solar neutrinos is covered in a six-line paragraph.

I am disappointed by Patrick Moore's *History of Astronomy*. This is not so much because the book is poor, but because it has all been done before so many times, not least by Patrick Moore himself. "History", here, scarcely develops beyond the ideas of the 1961 version, although this version is better illustrated, bigger and more detailed. Carl Sagan's *Cosmos* has recently managed to adapt the same sort of historical approach to a style which also conveys a flavour of the excitement of current research; Moore's version of the story gives the impression that astronomy is a dead subject. It is the sort of book you read because you are told to learn about astronomy, not because it is exciting in itself.

The *New Solar System* is altogether more exciting and interesting. It reports on the discoveries of the space age, from the Sun out to Saturn, and the new edition is welcome because the original, published in May 1981, appeared before Voyager 2 reached the ringed planet. But it, too, is history. Today, with the American space program severely curtailed, no new discoveries are likely to overtake this edition for some time.

The weather of Venus and Mars; the volcanoes of Io; Jupiter's Great Red Spot; Saturn's rings. All these and many more features of the Solar

System are described and pictured. Twenty chapters written by as many authors makes the text slightly uneven, but always authoritative, and although parts of the book might go over the heads of many pupils even in secondary schools, the book as a whole could make an invaluable teaching aid for a few lessons on the nature of our Solar System.

But for your own coffee table, the one to choose is definitely *The New Astronomy*. Picture editor Michael Marten has gathered a stunning collection of photographs of astronomical objects, most of them in colour, computer processed and enhanced to give optical images of what an X ray, or infrared or radio telescope "sees". The accompanying text, by Nigel Henbest, explains concisely how astronomers obtain these pictures, and interprets them in terms of the new astronomy - black holes get seven indexed references here, quasars appear on 14 pages. Many professional astronomers might be surprised at the wealth of information revealed by the new techniques described; at the other extreme, you don't have to know any science to appreciate the book. I showed my copy to a friend who is an artist by profession. To him, the beautiful plates are abstract patterns of colour, which have already stimulated him into new experiments at his easel.

The *New Astronomy* is first a beautiful book; secondly one which might be informative if your eyes ever stray from the pictures to the text. Above all, it emphasizes what is left out of the Patrick Moore type of astronomy. History is all very well, for historians. The living reality of current developments is what I find exciting in astronomy - and, come to that, in biology, music and art.

John Gribbin

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M D Joyce

CSE reflected

Physics Questions for Assessment at 16+. By Stanley Foster. Cambridge University Press £1.25. 0 521 28308 9.

This booklet provides no instant formulae for enlightenment, but is excellent material for all physics students who take their revision seriously. The author has chosen a sensible selection of CSE questions from several examination boards and separated them into major topics. The questions are a mixture of multiple choice, short and long answer, ranging over the whole syllabus. Answers to numerical parts are given at the end.

It is suggested the questions should be used in revision tests, both for CSE and O level classes, or for assessment purposes. There are few errors in the booklet, though one diagram gives a

very misleading view of how a plane mirror reflects the letters CSEI. Another diagram labels interrefraction fringes inconsistently. Generally the drawings are clear, though occasionally difficult to connect quickly with the appropriate question.

All teachers of physics to 16+ should have access to a copy of this booklet and some will certainly decide that class sets will be fully justified.

Physics for Today and Tomorrow 2nd edition. By Tom Duncan. John Murray £4.25. 0 7195 4002 X.

This O level and CSE textbook first appeared six years ago and since then has achieved a popularity both with teachers and pupils, being well written, attractively presented, yet concise. The diagrams and illustrations are

clear and well-chosen.

Now we have a new edition which adds short sections on crystals, mechanical properties of materials, beams and structures, and Bernoulli's principle. In addition 96 revision questions and answers taken from recent O level papers have been added at the end of the book. Class sets of books could, if necessary, be augmented with the new edition since the page numbers in both editions correspond. There are some helpful additions to the index, which were omitted from the first edition, and there has also been some updating of other information.

Curiously, the back cover mentions a new section on fluid flow and light, yet if you check fluid flow in the index and turn to page 110 there is nothing new, nor is there an entry in the index for light!

M D Joyce

F W Kellaway

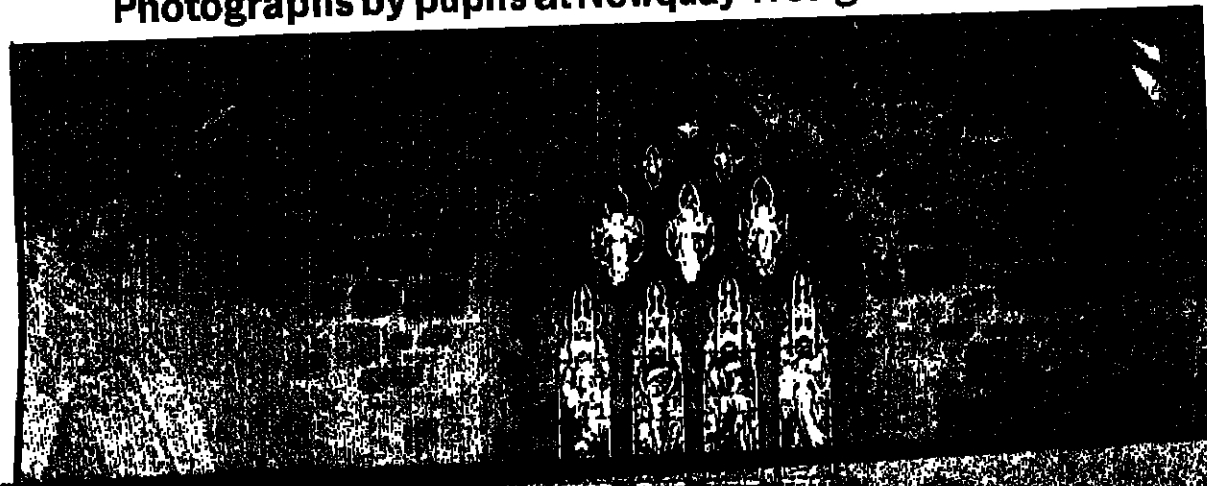
RESOURCES



CHRISTMAS

charity appeal week

Photographs by pupils at Newquay Treviglas School



Newquay Treviglas School is an 11-18 comprehensive serving a large, mainly rural area. It has about 650 pupils, including a sixth form of 80. Before Christmas, the sixth form organized a Christmas Charity Appeal Week, an annual event during which a large variety of fund-raising activities took place.

A major activity was the 'Come As You Live Day', in which pupils contributed £200 for the opportunity to wear their school uniforms to wear clothes of their own choice. Other events included a sponsored silence, an egg push, a sponsored dip in the sea, and fancy dress parades. More traditional events included carol concerts and plays.

These events have raised about £1,000 each year for charity. This year the proceeds will go towards the Cornwall Body Scarmer Appeal.

Photography was introduced into the school curriculum in 1977 as an option choice for fourth year pupils. Since then it has flourished, with CSE, O and A level courses being offered, as well as an activity within the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme.

The subject is a mixed ability option under the auspices of the art

department with an emphasis on the creative aspects of the medium rather than scientific record making. At present there are 65 fourth, fifth and sixth form pupils taking the subject, with the majority working towards the mode 3 CSE examination offered by the school. This examination concentrates on the practical

side of photography with 60 per cent of the marks derived from practical coursework. The remaining 40 per cent of marks come from a practical examination in which they are given a month to produce a series of photographs in response to one starting point chosen from an examination paper.

The school is equipped with two dark rooms and 20 reflex and non-reflex cameras as well as a range of supplementary equipment, including studio lights and various flash guns.

Pupils are encouraged to pursue the subject in an individual way, exploring as many aspects of the subject as possible. This has led to many pupils setting up their own darkrooms at home and buying their own photographic equipment.

The pupils also supply publicity photographs covering various school activities including sports days, presentations and school plays.

These photographs will form part of a major photographic exhibition to be held in the County Museum, Truro, June 8 to 29. The exhibition will consist solely of photographs taken by pupils of the school over the past three years.



RESOURCES



MEDIA

Video times

VIDEO
Beebites (BBCV 9004), £22.35
Blue Peter Makes... (BBCV 9007), £22.35
Grange Hill (BBCV 9012) £37.30
All formats available from BBC Publications, 35 Marylebone High St, London W1.

With a wealth of material "in the can" and waiting, the BBC are potentially the biggest video publishers of them all. Already their video catalogue reads like the *Radio Times*, with both a selection of feature films (those currently available would make a slightly better-than-average week on TV) and specially-produced versions of programmes like *Mr Smith's Indoor Garden* and *Play Golf with Peter Allis*.

It is only with this autumn's crop of new releases that BBC Video have started selling much in the way of highlights from popular light entertainment and drama series. *The Best of the Two Ronnies* and selected episodes from such series as *The Fall and Rise of Reginald Perrin*, *Target*, *Butterflies* and *The Good Life* will be popular -

but surely as tapes to hire from the video club rather than as permanent buys.

Children are well served by both the main catalogue and the new releases. In addition to compilations from such general interest programmes as *Dr Who* and *Top of the Pops*, there are also series like *Children's Favourites* features episodes of *Ivor the Engine*, *Bagpuss* and *Clangers*. Its sequel, the more memorably named *Beebites*, provides more of the same plus 15 minutes of the redoubtable *Noggin the Nog*. On both (and all four series come from Oliver Postgate's Smallfilms studio) the real stars are the *Clangers*.

Appearing from their saucepan-lidded burrows, swanee-whistling sweet nothings to each other, they were the most inventive, delightful incumbents of that 5.35pm pre-News slot since *The Magic Roundabout*.

Janet Ellis, the new presenter on *Blue Peter* joined the programme just in time to get her picture into the latest *Blue Peter Book*. She was, however, a little late for *Blue Peter Makes...* a compilation of the how-to-do-it items from the programme introduced by her predecessor Sarah Greene together with Simon Groom and Peter Duncan.

Artfully, forestalling any criticism of

role-stereotyping, it is Peter who tackles the cooking. But *Orange Surprise* and *Chef Duncan's Baked Bean and Dumpling Soup* are not all he is good for; it is also Peter Duncan who demonstrates the construction of the famous *Blue Peter* sledge, explaining all the technicalities of equipment and by a specially-recorded message in which Sarah, Peter and Simon point out that one can always rewind the tape or freeze the frame to scribble down the recipes and instructions. Try making the sledge without!

Followers of the current series *Tucker's Luck* will know Tucker Jenkins as a teenage denizen of the dole queue. The videogram of *Grange Hill*, one more of this autumn's releases, recalls something of his progress there. Episodes from the first series of programmes have been edited to make a seamless 106-minute film which follows the fortunes of Tucker, Benny, Judy and the rest in the first days at a teenage denizen of the dole queue. The videogram of *Grange Hill*, one more of this autumn's releases, recalls something of his progress there. Episodes from the first series of programmes have been edited to make a seamless 106-minute film which follows the fortunes of Tucker, Benny, Judy and the rest in the first days at a teenage denizen of the dole queue.

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Hugh David

Brain child

Is Your Brain Really Necessary?
A 50-minute colour film by Yorkshire Television
Format: VHS or Betamax
Price: £40 plus VAT (for use within a school or college)
Available from International Television Enterprises Ltd, 27 Upper Brook St, London W1Y 1PD (tel 01-491 1441) or for hire on 16mm film from Concord Film Institute, Ipswich, Suffolk.

Yorkshire Television have made available on video their fascinating and exasperating treatment of a Sheffield doctor's remarkable discovery: that several young people, apparently recovered from childhood hydrocephalus, are functioning with only a small fraction of the usual human brain. Not only functioning, in fact, but passing GCSEs and going to university!

This central datum has both piquan-

cy and serious implications - with which the programme never fully comes to grips. Incredibly enough, it suffers from vast quantities of padding. The three young folk were taken to Denmark for tests with a new brain-scanning device, which becomes the occasion for endless shots of them waiting for and boarding trains; sitting in airport lounges; sitting on aeroplanes; arriving in Copenhagen... all accompanied by the interviewer asking the doctor over and over again if this is really terribly important, and doctor replying over and over again that yes it is really terribly important.

After the third-rate travelogue, we are subjected to some clumsy third-rate suspense as everyone waits for the brain-scan images to emerge: will they, won't they, prove to be really terribly important? The answer somehow never properly emerges; just as the dis-covering doctor's theory is never coherently stated, and seems to consist mainly of metaphysical speculation about the nature of thought.

Something very extraordinary is certainly going on; one glance at the gaping cavities inside these three heads is enough to establish that much. Yet the programme itself contains an equally gaping absence: not a single

brain specialist's opinion is canvassed. (The discoverer himself is a paediatrician.) As so often with the medium, we smell a rat: is vital information being withheld for the sake of "good television"?

And we don't even get the good television. Or rather, only in part - and those parts tangential to the main subject of the film. In a messy piece of surgery, a whole opening segment has been sewn on concerned with the effects and treatment of hydrocephalus itself. It would be indecent to label as padding these intensely moving interviews with the inventor of a crucial valve for draining the skull, whose own child died too soon ("though he died, I have thousands of babies that are mine all over the world"); and with the mother who waits while her little daughter undergoes a kill-or-cure operation.

The interviews with the three youngsters and their parents are also attractive and involving. The film would fascinate most sixth forms; how much it would inform them is another question. Perhaps its primary educational use is as raw material for the critical analysis of TV as a medium.

Nick Thomas

Colour bar

David Self on "The Rainbow Coloured Disco Dancer"
The English Programme
Thames Television for ITV
January 30 at 10.31 am
Repeated February 1 at 10.21 am

One of the last plays to be written by the prolific C P Taylor before his untimely death in 1981 was *The Rainbow Coloured Disco Dancer*. It explores the life and fantasies of Carol, a teenager who has been brought up by white parents as their own child. In fact Carol is the offspring of her mother's pre-marital relationship with another (black) man.

Taunted by a group of skinheads about her skin colour, Carol desperately tries to convince herself and her friend Elaine that she is just "suntanned". In her often violent fantasies, she similarly tries to escape the realities that surround her. Like many of C P Taylor's plays, it was written specifically for young audiences and shows his undoubted understanding of the preoccupations of young people, the conflicts that engulf their minds and the emotional currents running in their social groups.

On the page, the script of *The Rainbow Coloured Disco Dancer* reads well. It is joky and ultimately optimistic in the way that Carol comes to terms with her colour and her parents. Adapted for *The English Programme* television series by John Godber, it is necessarily compressed, but has been confidently directed by Edward Joffe in a style that owes little

to the hand of C P Taylor. In Janet Steel, he has a sensitive and sympathetic (but in no way feeble) Carol - yet here lies one of the main problems of the production. Bluntly, it is inconceivable that Carol, as she appears in this production, could have reached her mid-teens without questioning her identity within her family. Add to this the filmic realism of the scene in which she roughs up a couple of skinheads ("I just went wild") and takes one to hospital, and it all becomes somewhat unconvincing to say the least.

Even so, it is an intriguing and beguiling play. The "and now discuss" triggers are unobtrusively built into the production and it is another example of *The English Programme's* readiness to experiment with surrealism.

Other plays in the unit of programmes to be seen in the first half of term are *Derek* by Edward Bond and *Audition* by Alan Cullen. *Derek* (January 16 and 18) is about a sharp-witted Cockney teenager who is persuaded to swap brains with a dumb member of the upper classes. *Audition* (January 23 and 25) is about 15-year-old Rachel, keen to get a part in her school's production of *The Crucible* and confused by her own and her parents' sexuality. The unit concludes with a repeat of *Willy Russell's* much admired play about a compulsive daydreamer, *The Boy with the Transistor Radio* (February 13 and 15; also 20 and 22).

David Self



Mum (Sue Nicholls), Carol (Janet Steel) and Dad (Tim Healy)

Serving science

David Tawney on the coming of age of CLEAPSE

CLEAPSE (the Consortium of Local Education Authorities for the Provision of Science Equipment) was formed in 1963 and its science equipment information service, the Development Group, set up in temporary accommodation in Vauxhall in 1964, which means that it can now celebrate its coming of age. The 20th member L.E.A. has recently joined the consortium.

In the early 1960s, a group of science teachers became concerned that important curriculum developments would be hampered by the lack of suitable apparatus. They approached the Ministry of Education which, although glad to act as godmother, suggested that L.E.A.s would be the best distributors of much paper, the consortium was set up, with the then London County Council playing a leading part.

The consortium was intended to provide two services: the bulk purchase of equipment for economy of scale and the development of apparatus to match the needs of the new curricula. In the event, the services provided were not exactly as anticipated. Although a few large L.E.A.s have central purchasing for some items of science equipment, most allow schools to buy the items they want from a range of suppliers. Since this freedom of choice is valued by teachers, Cleapase has never set up a bulk purchase scheme.

What the services officer was able to achieve were discount terms for its members which were more favourable than most could obtain for themselves. This arrangement continues, but has been restricted by suppliers to the original Cleapase area of the midlands.

The consortium project was well under way with each subject's project team developing its own apparatus. The Cleapase Development Group, therefore, had to change direction slightly. Some new apparatus was developed, but mainly they concentrated on helping schools choose from the flood of new items appearing on the market.

Which type reports were only part of the service. Teachers headed for the new apparatus which was not always easy to use. Its arrival stimulated a new look at some of the old apparatus, and there was a renewed

interest in d-i-y. A bulletin was regularly distributed and advisory panels of teachers and L.E.A. advisers were set up.

In 1967 the Development Group moved to its permanent home, a suite of laboratories, a workshop and rooms at Brunel University, Uxbridge. The Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974 imposed new responsibilities on L.E.A.s. The best known element of the Development Group's response was *Hazards*, a set of index cards each devoted to a chemical process or topic in school chemistry and biology. The emphasis was on safer alternatives, precautions or developing safe techniques, rather than on prohibition.

Other guides were concerned with chemical storage, handling mercury and electrical safety. The Group also provided a consultancy service in the whole field of school laboratory safety.

We have cooperated with the Association for Science Education (ASE) and the Scottish Schools Science Equipment Research Centre and with the National Industry Group for Education of the Health and Safety Executive.

When we began to provide safety information, our links with L.E.A.s were through the science advisers. Increasingly L.E.A.s appointed safety officers and we have tried to communicate with them as well.

Cleapase set up two monitoring services, one to check, through airflow measurements, the efficiency of school fume cupboards, the other to measure mercury vapour levels in school science rooms. Both have been well used by members and comprehensive data have been accumulated.

In the late seventies we began to work more rather than on micro-

computing. This led to a short course for second or third formers entitled "Microelectronics for All". It was about this time that schools began to meet considerable problems with deficient apparatus. Bought in the more affluent late sixties and early seventies, much of it was reaching the end of its working life at a time when funds for replacement and repair were short.

The last major change in the late seventies was the opening of eligibility for membership to all L.E.A.s in England and Wales. The DES had hoped that organizations like Cleapase would

be established in Wales and the north of England. Consequently they had enforced a geographical restriction on membership. Since other groups were not being developed, an invitation to join Cleapase was sent to all L.E.A.s. Membership rose from 43 in 1978 to 60 today.

"This year the group has been replaced by 'The Cleapase School Science Service' with four science graduates, all ex-teachers, two technicians and three office staff. Salaries and expenses are paid by member L.E.A.s through annual subscriptions.

Staff are employed by the ILEA on behalf of the consortium. A governing committee of all members meets annually and has two sub-committees.

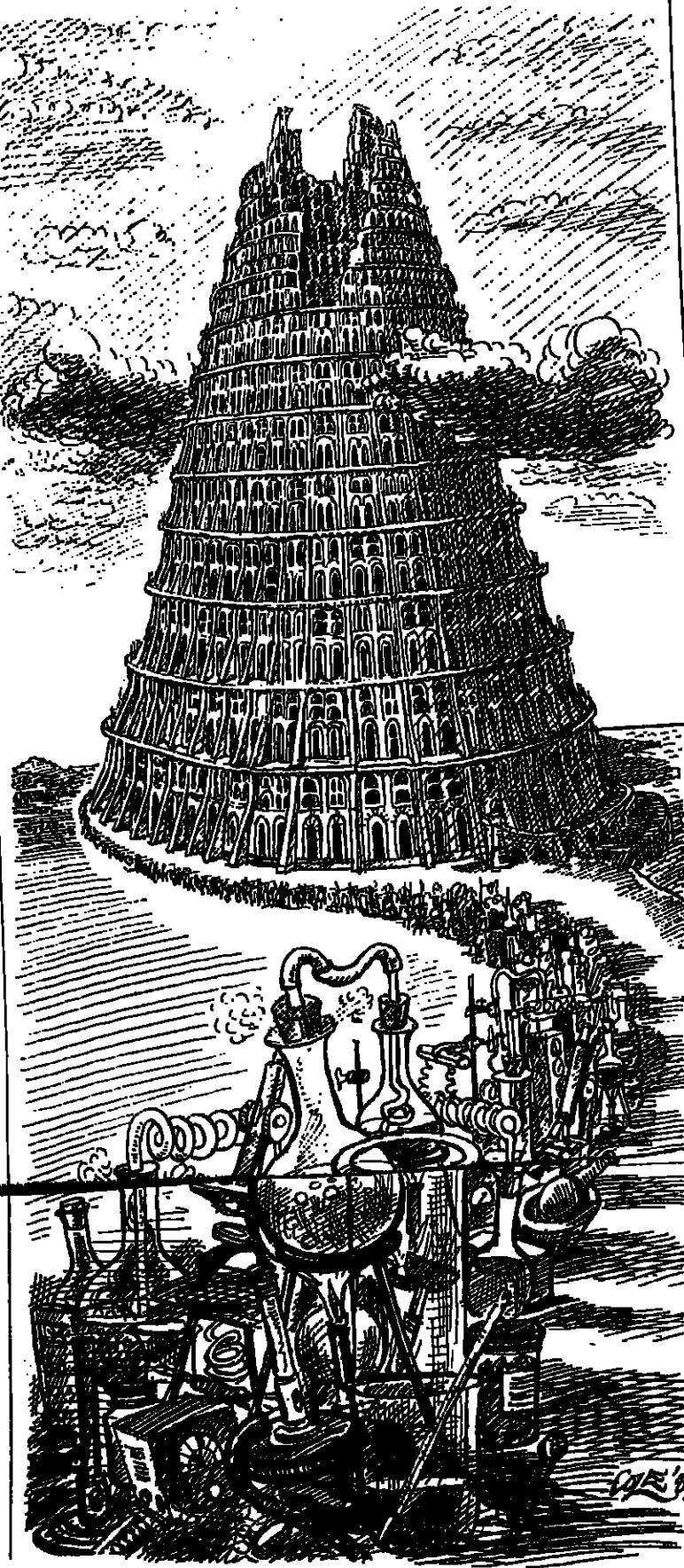
In the last four years a newsletter, *The Science Equipment News*, has been issued to primary and middle schools together with guides written for this level. The response has been very encouraging. Taking both levels, 15 or so new and revised guides, varying in length, are made available each year and over 20,000 copies issued, most sent on request to individual schools.

School Science Service staff visit L.E.A.s to give talks, contribute to courses or act as consultants. They also set up workshops for school technicians lasting a day and held in an L.E.A. centre, college or school. Topics covered are microscope maintenance, elementary electrical work and handling chemicals and most of the time is spent on practical work.

Shortage of technicians and of funds for repair and replacement of apparatus is increasing the pressure on school science staff and hampering science teaching in many schools.

Our information should help members in the science curriculum. The considerable demand for our guides encourages us to think that this approach is right. The growth in our membership has produced economies of scale but even so we have to budget very carefully, trying to keep L.E.A. costs for our services as low as possible. Science advisers, science teachers and laboratory technicians are having to struggle to provide good science education for our young people and it is our job to serve them.

David Tawney is the director of the Cleapase School Science Service but the views expressed are not necessarily those of the service.



Sussex sounds

A Century of Change
Read by Robert Hardy
Lloyd George to Beveridge
Read by Trevor Macdonald
Sussex Tapes, Townsend Poulshot,
Devizes, Wilt.
Each £5.98 (cassette), £6.50 (reel)

Sussex Tapes have moved down the age range and produced their first material for Q level and CSE. These are two eight-tape series making up a series entitled "A Social and Economic History of Britain 1700-1950", a subject which covers some of the most popular 16+ syllabuses.

Instead of the now-traditional Sussex Tapes' meeting of academic minds in unscripted discussion, the script is read by a well-known voice, interspersed with readings from contemporary sources and the odd industrial song. A few rather basic sound effects - angry rioting noises for people pulling down the first turnpikes in disgust at the tolls, horses' hooves - make it more difficult to hear what's being said, but certainly add to the atmosphere. This move on tape towards something more like the typical radio programme than the typical

exam-gear tape is a welcome one, not only for its presentation, but for the research and assembly of relevant sources, for which teachers have less and less time. With each tape comes a factsheet that can be copied for distribution to pupils, containing a synopsis of what's on the tape, a few notes or hints (watch out for the spelling of Seaborn Rowntree), a bibliography and some questions for further study.

A Century of Change is about population growth, agriculture and transport. Population is a difficult topic at this level because there are even fewer right answers than in the rest of history. Robert Hardy reads beautifully through a series of favourite, outsider and no-hoper positions as causes of the tremendous surge in the 18th-century population, but the script doesn't make it sufficiently clear which were which. Otherwise the tape is ideal, including all the standard information on Coke and Townshend, Brindley and Telford, and, in addition, some illuminating, eyewitness accounts. Onlookers gasp and cannot roar from the riverbank at the opening of Telford's 19-span aqueduct over the River Dee; Cobbett waxed lyrical at the awe-inspiring sight

of a coach-and-eight setting out, while a German onlooker marvels at the ease and apparent comfort in which people travel on top of the stagecoach without a seat or even a rail. Everything on road and canal was geared to equine size, strength and capacity; before the age of the train this was the age of the horse.

Lloyd George to Beveridge describes the 20th-century discovery that for all its reforms and prosperity the Victorian age had still left a legacy of poverty. It covers the Liberal reaction, the effects of two wars, the economic problems between them, and the real beginnings of the welfare state. A section on inter-war unemployment and poverty implicitly condemns governments' assumptions that the level of social services must fall in line with an ailing economy. Governments' certainty haven't changed.

This is a more sombre subject than the 18th century when the Industrial Revolution was still in the making, and the tape is correspondingly less vivid. But it will serve a useful purpose either for introducing the topics for the first time, or at the other end of the process, for revision.

Jessica Saraga

Cell structure

Mitosis/Melosis Print Set
Reference M80001/2. Price £9.75.
Available from Philip Harris Biological Ltd, Oldmixon, Weston-super-Mare, Avon. BS24 9BJ.

The pack consists of a set of A4 sheets on thin glossy card. Two sheets contain 12 photographs of different stages of mitosis and a further two sheets another 12 pictures of mitosis. Ten sets of each sheet are supplied in the pack together with a set of teaching notes.

The material for the photographs was prepared using a standard technique, which used lucifer yellow dye in the chromosomes stain. Cells in the anthers of *Lilium auratum* were used for the mitotic stages and cells from onion root tip for the mitotic ones.

The notes make very clear the need to emphasize the differences in timing between the process of cell division and interphases between successive mitotic divisions - a useful analogy used here is that of hurdlings on a athletics track. The photographs of the stages of mitosis are wedge-shaped and are intended to be cut out and

arranged to form a clock face indicating the continuity of the process. In contrast mitosis only occurs once during a generation cycle and therefore a linear arrangement is more appropriate. For both types of cell division diagrams provide an indication of the timing of the different stages.

The rest of the notes provide a concise description of the stages of division directly related to the photographs. It is suggested that the pictures be cut out and stuck on to a sheet of card and appropriately labelled to produce a chart of the process. They do, however, neglect to mention the value of presenting a class with sets of the pictures with the numbers removed and giving them the task to sort the material into the correct order of events - a technique that was introduced with Nuffield Biology in the mid sixties but is still appropriate today.

The photographs themselves are good examples of the material that students might, if lucky, find in their own preparations. Thus they perform another important function as a direct help to practical work in enabling identification of stages to be made.

John A Barker

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Primary School Education

Scale 1 Posts

OLDHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH
GLOWWICH INFANT NURSERY SCHOOL, Glodwick Road, Oldham. Temporary Scale 1 Teacher.
Required for January 1984 or soonest possible thereafter, mainly reception children.
The school is open plan and has a large group of children. The school has a high proportion of main pupils, from 1984 to 31st August 1984.
Applications by letter, giving full details and the names and addresses of two referees, to the Head at the school, 31st August 1984.

BEXLEY
LONDON BOROUGH OF BEXLEY, BEXLEY SCHOOL, Bexley Road, Bexley, Kent DA5 3JH.
English teacher, Scale 1, part-time, wanted for January. An enthusiastic, reliable teacher for two days a week subject to some negotiation. Send letter of application, together with details of experience, to the Headmaster, L.A.A. 6645, (61971) 152422.

Mathematics

Scale 2 Posts and above

AVON COUNTY
NORTH HILL SCHOOL, Charlton Road, Midsomer Norton, Bath BA3 4AP.
Norton, Bath BA3 4AP. Roll: 160 mixed (100 in 6th form).
Required for April 1984. Teacher of Mathematics (Scale 2).
Able to teach subject to Advanced Level, but also capable of initiating and taking responsibility for less able pupils. Further details from, and letters of application by 15th January. Headmaster, L.A.A. 6645, (61971) 152422.

Middle School Education

By Subject Classification

Music

Scale 1 Posts

BEDFORDSHIRE
NORTHERN ARCADE SCHOOL, 150 The Arcade, Bedford. Bedfordshire. Headmaster: Mr. J. James. Tel: 52001.
Required for January 1984. A Music Teacher, Scale 1, to teach Music throughout the year and to be responsible for organising the subject. An interest in extra-curricular aspects of the subject is essential.
NB. Application forms and further details from D. J. H. Knowles, Northern Area Education Office, County Hall, Cauldwell Street, Bedford. Please apply immediately, as please. (66064) 123822.

Secondary Education

By Subject Classification

Classics

Heads of Department

LONDON

URULINE CONVENT

15 The Downs, Wimbledon. Girls Comprehensive High School. SW20 9ND.
Required for February 1984. A Mathematics teacher, Scale 1, to teach to O and A Level for specific of appropriate qualifications.
Application forms should be obtained from the Headmaster, 15 The Downs, Wimbledon. Tel: 84001. Send three references (RAE please). (66385) 134222.

ESSEX

BARSTABLE SCHOOL

Barstable Close, Barstable, London SW20 9ND.
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DEONCASTER

MEXBOROUGH SCHOOL

Maple Road, Mexborough. S64 8BD.
Mexborough 585858.
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English

Scale 1 Posts

WILTSHIRE

THE RIDGEWAY SCHOOL

Inverary Road, Wroughton, Swindon, Wiltshire SN4 9JH.
Tel: Swindon (0753) 812824.
English teacher, Scale 1, part-time, wanted for January. An enthusiastic, reliable teacher for two days a week subject to some negotiation. Send letter of application, together with details of experience, to the Headmaster, L.A.A. 6645, (61971) 152422.

Modern Languages

Scale 1 Posts

LONDON

NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL (RC)

118 St. Georges Road, London SE1.
01-261 1011.
Required for January 1984. A French teacher, Scale 1, to teach to O and A Level for specific of appropriate qualifications. Send letter of application, together with details of experience, to the Headmaster, L.A.A. 6645, (61971) 152422.

Science

Scale 1 Posts

LONDON

NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL (RC)

118 St. Georges Road, London SE1.
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Physical Education

Scale 1 Posts

WILTSHIRE

THE RIDGEWAY SCHOOL

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Tel: Swindon (0753) 812824.
Physical Education teacher, Scale 1, part-time, wanted for January. An enthusiastic, reliable teacher for two days a week subject to some negotiation. Send letter of application, together with details of experience, to the Headmaster, L.A.A. 6645, (61971) 152422.

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Mathematics

PERSONAL



Ted Wragg

idea, and surely some British manufacturing genius can pick up a government grant to build a plastic udder factory and fill this gap in the market.

The annual golden bra award for the two biggest boobs of 1983 is won this year by the MSC. First they tried to stop political education and raised the ugly spectre of censorship and repression. Second when the Exeter College ran into financial difficulties because

there had been fewer Youth Training Scheme trainees than they had been led to believe, David Young had the cheek to accuse them of being inflexible. It was, in fact, their very flexibility and willingness to move wholeheartedly into supporting YTS work that brought about their financial problems when a large number of the trainees the MSC had predicted failed to materialize.

The Dullest Local Authority Scheme prize goes to Croydon for its plan to use blanket testing to root out bad schools and bad teachers. Teachers of remedial classes must already be putting in their bid for A stream groups next year. It is well known that some schools have a better endowed crotchment area than others, and that some teachers teach classes of higher ability than others. None of the statistical techniques, such as multiple regression analysis or analysis of covariance, used to "correct" or compensate for these initial and naturally occurring differences, is satisfactory. The Croydon scheme, if implemented, will only create ill-will, produce a narrow "teaching for the test" kind of curriculum, and return the borough to the nineteenth century and payment by results.

The hope for 1984, if hope is needed, is that most of our 400,000 teachers will continue to do their job well, despite a minority of incompetent teachers who get the rest a bad name and provide ammunition for those hostile to education. Their achievements will largely pass unnoted, though personally appreciated by those who benefit from a good education.

Some politicians and certain sectors of the press will continue to attack maintained schools at every opportunity and often for little good reason. I have never understood why nurses have such a good press and teachers such a bad one. These are two caring professions, and there are probably proportionately no more bad teachers or bad schools than there are ineffective nurses or poor hospitals.

Can you imagine newspaper headlines demanding the sacking of incompetent nurses or doctors? Or some medical equivalent of Croydon I.e.a. proposing that geriatric wards should be closed down because they have more chronically sick people in them? There is only one course of action I can recommend to you if anyone should attack your school unfairly in 1984. Hit them with your bedpan.

DIARY

Tales of a beaten Minister and the Old Bat

doctors is that they've been members of the TUC since the turn of the century - my address was just before Len Murray left the NGA in the lurch.

I add point to the story by telling them that during the general strike in County Durham, my Old Bat mum was the only professional allowed through the miners' picket lines. I get the feeling that my audience, some of whom are fairly genteel young ladies, who might otherwise have eschewed a polytechnic and done classics at Strawberry Hill, are genuinely impressed that some professions, at any rate, have always been on the side of the workers.



William van Straubensee

Back to Queen's. After my classical

and we discuss my new-found interest in biotechnology. The subject used to be called "genetic manipulation", and the change in nomenclature was meant, partly, to signal the disappearance of ethical worries and the emergence of a new industrial process which could change all our lives for the better. I'm sure that could well be.

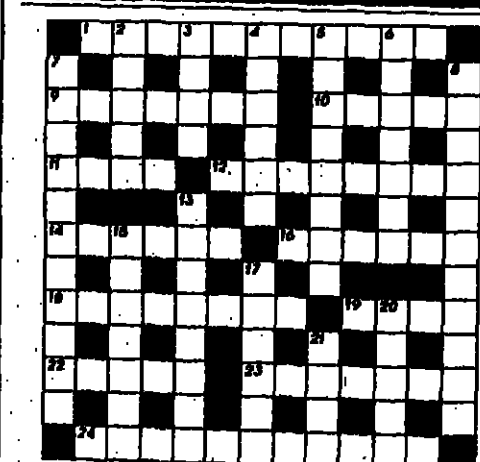
But I am warned over the main course that although researchers are quite properly pent about with all sorts of rules about experimenting with the cells of rats there are no rules which apply to human cells. But then the English, and their royalty, have always been more concerned about animals than people (the RSPCA, but the NSPCC). I suppose that's why Sir Keith and the Government remain so complacent about the continuance of corporal punishment.

A New Year memo to my distinguished successor as chairman of the Select Committee on Education - Arts, Sir William van Straubensee. I've already advised him to complete the inquiry into the education and training of 16 to 19-year-olds. The other inquiry which we didn't quite finish and I hope he will, was on public records.

I admit the subject was somewhat on the fringe of the committee's terms of reference. (But since the committee interprets its own terms of reference, that proved no problem.) We'd heard all our witnesses except one - Lord Blake, my High Tory provost. I got the distinct feeling that he'd love to be sub-poenaed again. There's a draft report in a bottom drawer somewhere, dressed up with Lord Blake's distinguished evidence, it couldn't possibly be accused of bias. I hope the committee finishes that report too.

Christopher Price

No 132 CROSSWORD by Rufus



ACROSS

- 1 Martin hopes to mix, (the very thing he hates) (11)
9 Relatively patronising
10 In decimal it represents 14 pints (5)
11 Creatures having small feet with a point at each end (4)
12 Claps are heavenly like this! (8)
14 Eat out? (6)
16 Extent of one's education (6)
18 Reconciled to having had to give up work (8)

- 19 Experts break the case (4)
22 Hearing test (5)
23 To argue can cause offence (7)
24 Not only fair-weather soldiers, apparently (5, 6)

Down

- 2 In short, it's an imposition (5)
3 Hothead raised the stake (4)
4 Bill of fare? (6)
5 Allowed to go into print? (8)
6 Vessel avoided by poor sailors?
7 Fate, took food to excess (11)
8 The favourite in form (8, 3)
13 Odd number (8)
15 He quibbles about suits after the bill goes up (7)
17 Noisy record of a child's progress (6)
20 Reunited getting electrical power by credit (5)
21 A man to turn to (4)
Christmas Crossword solution page 8

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never get home for Christmas in middle ages, so the festive season is filled with quiet customs, which the men seem to enjoy. We are served what the menu calls *La hure de sanglier Robert*, which a French *dos* tells me means "boar's head". It tastes a bit like British Rail kidney.

We drink and eat and pray a great deal for the living, the dead, the Church, the Queen and her realm, and for our delinquent selves. (*Deus dei vniuersum, defunctis regnum, ecclesiae, Regibus, regnoque nostro pacem et concordiam et nobis peccatoribus vitam aeternam*.) It seems a somewhat arrogant request of the almighty. Unlike the Church of England, the college avoids praying for the High Court of Parliament at This Time Assembled.

Its only concession to Parliament since my day seems to be that, instead of electing a shy, self-effacing lawyer called Mr Jones (who presided over the place in the 1950s) they now have a real, High Tory, historian-peer called



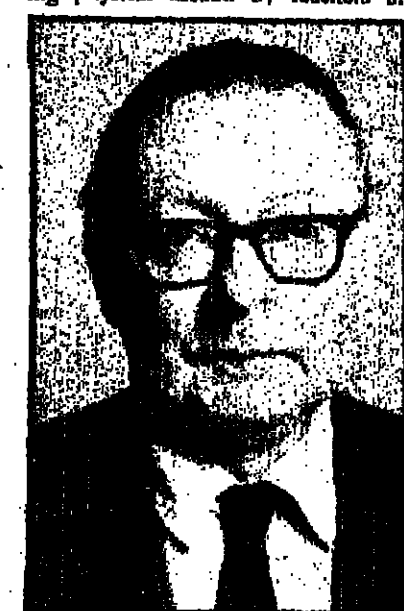
Michael Heseltine... school problems

from Asquith to Douglas-Home. It sounds as if it will sell well in the current political climate and become required A level reading in no time.

Though Lord Blake, concerned, no doubt for my moral welfare, attempts to surround me with clerics (a lafter in front of me, a canon to my left) he doesn't entirely succeed. I fall into conversation with an extremely bright classicist who was at school with Michael Heseltine, and reveals to me the psychological basis of the mid-life crisis from which our Minister of Defence is suffering. Apparently he was severely beaten at school on a number of occasions for walking into town wearing a green trolley.

It is clear that the Government, which is currently agonizing over corporal punishment, (a bit like the NGA - over how to square the law of the land with their principles) should consult Michael over this knotty issue.

Sir Keith must have finished "consulting" on it by now and he can't seriously be thinking of going ahead with his original scheme of concentrating physical assault by teachers in



Lord Blake... High Tory

I tell the health visitors that their chief advantage over both nurses and